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ABSTRACT

Selected papers from the annual meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics include the following: "The Scope of Applied Linguistics" (a brief introduction by Paul Meara); "Grading and Professionalism in ELT (English Language Teaching)" (Gillian Brown); "'The Arm of the Chair Is Where You Use For To Write': Developing Strategic Competence in a Second Language" (Elaine Tarone); "Language Production-Language Contact: The Significance of Learners' Speech" (Hans Dechert); "Towards an Alternative Model of Second Language Learning" (Jill Bourne); "Interpretations and Explanations in Discourse: Modes of Advising in Family Planning" (C. Candlin, J. Lucas); "Acknowledging the Conversational Attempts of a Young Mentally Handicapped Child" (Susan Edwards); "Writing in a Foreign Language and Rhetorical Transfer: Influences on Raters' Evaluations" (Liz Hamp-Lyons); "Conversation as Listening Material: The Prosodic Bases of Difficulty" (Catherine Johns-Lewis); "Where Does Language Aptitude Come From?" (Peter Skehan); and "As Teacher, As Learner" (Olivia Farrington). (MSE)

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British Studies in Applied Linguistics 1

BAAL

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

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BRITISH STUDIES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS 1

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Papers from the Annual Meeting of the
British Association for Applied Linguistics
held at the
University of Edinburgh
September 1985

Edited by Paul Meara

1986
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
for
British Association for Applied Linguistics

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Introduction: The scope of applied linguistics

Paul Meara

Birkbeck College, London University

Fifteen years ago, when BAAL was still in its infancy, and applied linguistics was a new and unformed discipline, almost all the association's members were involved in teaching languages, and the bulk of the research work reported at BAAL's annual meetings concerned syllabus design, contrastive analyses, and similar related topics. Over the years, this emphasis has gradually changed. BAAL now attracts members with a very wide range of research interests, but more importantly, perhaps, the type of research that we carry out is now much more varied and heterodox than was the case in the early days of the association. Although most of us would still see ourselves primarily as linguists, much of the work we do depends less on developments in theoretical linguistics, and more on developments in other fields, notably sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and the various branches of clinical linguistics.

This widening interest is reflected in the types of research that are presented at the annual meetings. The early meetings of the asociation were strongly weighted towards practical, pedagogical matters. Theory was largely imported from linguistics, and there were few papers which presented empirical data of any sort. The papers chosen for inclusion in this volume show how far we have come in developing a more autonomous theoretical framework, and a more rigorous empirical approach to the claims these theories generate.

This volume, which we intend to be the first of a series, contains a selection of papers from the Edinburgh Meeting, held in September 1985. It contains edited versions of papers presented by three invited speakers (Brown, Tarone and Dechert). These papers all deal with aspects of SPOKEN LANGUAGE, the general theme of the meeting. Six other papers are also included, some of which were supported from BAAL's small research grants fund. Bourne develops a critique of some widely held assumptions underlying current models of second language learning. Candlin and Lucas discuss the application of pragmatic theory to family planning interviews. Edwards discusses how mothers and other caretakers interact with mentally handicapped children. Hamp-Lyons shows how different rhetorical traditions shape the way non-native speakers write, and more importantly, how these different traditions affect the way examiners judge what they write. Johns-Lewis presents a

detailed analysis of the acoustic characteristics of different speech styles. Skehan provides a report of his work on relationships between language development in young children and subsequent aptitude for foreign languages. Finally, in addition to these nine papers, and at popular request, I have included a poem by Olivia Farrington, which demonstrates that, despite all appearances to the contrary, BAAL members still retain a capacity for self-irony....

1. Grading and professionalism in ELT

Gillian Brown

University of Essex

1 THE LANGUAGE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE COMMUNICATIVE SYLLABUS

With the move away from what Howatt (1984) calls 'the Hornby era', from language syllabuses which are based primarily on graded grammatical exercises with steadily increasing vocabulary, to syllabuses which are based on a view that the important thing about learning a language is to be able to use it to communicate with, there has arisen increased concern with how to provide environments in which students can actually communicate - where 'communication' means what it normally means in human experience, that is, that you have a speaker who has something he wants to say for a particular purpose to a listener who, the speaker feels, ought to hear what he has to say. So, to set up a communicative situation you need:

1) a speaker who wants to communicate a message for a purpose;
2) a listener who needs the information which the speaker has;
3) information which the speaker has and the listener has not.

I have talked about 'information' which needs to be transferred, and in general that is what I want to talk about here. I shall be ignoring, then, a very important part of language use: the use of language to establish and maintain social relationships - the patterns of greetings, farewells, desultory chat, whose primary purpose is to oil the social wheels rather than to transfer information. Suppose two friends go into a waiting room, and are overwhelmed by a blast of cold air as they go in. If they produce the following exchange:

A: Gosh, it's cold in here.
B: It's certainly cold in here.

they can hardly, in any normal sense, be said to be exchanging information which one has and the other doesn't have. Their primary concern is not to inform each other, but to maintain a comfortable togetherness, a feeling of viewing the world from the same perspective, of basic agreement about how the world is. The importance of this area of language use cannot be overstated from a social point of view. My concern, however, is with teaching students to control information-bearing language. I am concerned,

then, only with part of the spoken language syllabus, and indeed, within the general area of information-bearing language only with that part which is designed to help a student transfer a quite complex piece of information, and which requires the ability to string a number of utterances together into a long turn.

Within the communicative approach, the overwhelming shift in teaching methodology is towards the control of information transference within a task-based approach. Here the communicative set-up can be a genuine one - a speaker has some information which the listener needs in order to complete a task. The speaker is motivated to speak, and the listener is motivated to listen because they both want to complete the task successfully. We witness an astonishing range of inventions poured into the construction of attractively packaged materials which will motivate students to produce and understand language in an ecologically natural way. In theory at least we then have classes of motivated students happily communicating away with each other, and teachers who happily witness this busy communication taking place, and whose only contribution is to supply the odd lexical item or grammatical structure at the moment when a student actually needs it - an ideal situation for a teacher, one might think.

Note that in this scenario a number of well-established notions in language teaching have apparently disappeared. We have lost the notion of the systematic grading of materials - this notion is apparently viewed as one which related to the grading of grammatical structures in the old structural syllabuses, but which can hardly be usefully applied within a communicative syllabus. Most courses on the market still claim to present 'graded' materials, but the authors don't specify what their principles of grading are - and careful study of the sequence of materials usually fails to reveal any principle of grading. Mentioning 'grading' seems to be just a bob to appeasing some half-forgotten pre-historic god.

Just as 'grading' has disappeared, so apparently, has the notion of 'diagnostic testing' - the construction of tests which would enable teachers to determine what their pupils were having difficulty with, in order that the teacher could develop exercises which would address that particular problem, and so help the student to do better.

Not only has the notion of diagnostic testing as a systematic tool of enquiry disappeared, so also has the notion that the teacher controls professional knowledge which could allow her to help a student who is having problems in learning a language in the context of a communicative syllabus. That is to say: if a pupil has difficulty in performing a task adequately, the teacher is not provided with any theoretical basis which could help her to help

the student perform better next time round. All the teacher can do is give the student more and more practice, in the hope that the student will cotton on to whatever problem he has, and solve his problem by himself. The only direct help the teacher can give is to suggest particular words, or structures, which the student might have found helpful in the present case, to hope he will remember them, and that they will come in useful again.

Under the new regime, the role of the teacher has dramatically changed. Thirty years ago, the professional teacher of English as a foreign/second language knew a great deal about the structure of the English language. She knew how to grade the presentation of syntax and lexis so that students encountered simple structure first, and only gradually moved on to encounter more difficult structures. She knew how to test what structures the student had acquired. She knew, within the bounds of the paradigm, how to construct exercises to help the student master structures he had difficulty with. She knew how to assess how well the student performed in relatively well-understood test formats. Today, the teacher often knows very much less from a professional point of view, particularly about the structure of the language, and it is considered acceptable in many current teacher training courses to ignore old-style testing, since we no longer believe that learning structures is what language learning is about. The teacher's professionalism is now seen to lie in providing a satisfactory structure to the classroom environment; in selecting or constructing interesting and motivating tasks which will give the student the opportunity to use the foreign language in a purposeful way; and in providing relevant vocabulary and grammatical structures as and when the students need them. Professionalism is now judged to lie in the ability to run a good class - one that is socially cheerful and cohesive -, to be familiar with and to have opinions about the range of materials available, and to know what works well in the classroom. In the context of the communicative syllabus it seems appropriate that it is the teacher's social skills which are profesionally valued.

Note, however, that any teacher, in any subject area, requires that same professional expertise. A good mathematics class, just as much as a good language class, requires the same sort of professional input from the teacher to secure an environment in which learning is encouraged. It seems clear that any professional teacher needs a rather similar input in terms of the psychology of learning, the management of social interaction, and so on. What, then, does the professional teacher of English command as professional knowledge which distinguishes her from the professional teacher of mathematics? For the teacher of English, what technical knowledge is equivalent to the technical knowledge of the teacher of mathematics? Clearly, it is not enough to say that the teacher of

English knows English, since the teacher of mathematics may also know English.

As we all know, there is a tendency abroad these days to suggest that language teachers do not significantly affect the learning of a foreign language by the average adolescent in the classroom - a view particularly associated with Krashen (1981, 1982) and researchers interested in his views (Ellis 1984, for instance). The language teacher is seen rather as an accomplished scene-setter who sets a scene in which her students will start acquiring their target language, given 'motivation and comprehensible input' (Corder 1967). This seems to be increasingly interpreted as implying that there really is no way in which the teacher can assist the student to progress more rapidly. The teacher and the student can only co-operate to provide a rich context in which the student's language acquisition device may be automatically activated.

A number of established EFL teachers and scholars have argued against the apparent abandonment of the teacher's traditional role as the authoritative professional who on the one hand controls the matter which the students need to learn, and on the other hand provides the student with suitably graded materials, professionally chosen. Recent papers, for instance Brumfitt (1985), Strevens (1984), Swan (1985) and Widdowson (1985), have made these sorts of points forcefully. I wonder, though, if the new orthodoxies are not being too strongly stated. If we compare the teaching of a language with the teaching of mathematics, we have in both cases a rich symbolic system where it is necessary to learn the forms in the system and the possible relations holding between these forms. It is also necessary to learn to recognise occasions of appropriate application. Is the learning of a language necessarily so different from learning mathematics? (I am assuming here, of course, that 'learning mathematics' means 'learning to do mathematics', and not 'learning about mathematics', which is a different sort of activity.)

It seems clear that mathematics teachers need to be able not only to DO mathematics, but also to KNOW ABOUT mathematics, so that they can explain why a particular application is wrong on a particular occasion. It seems to me equally clear that a professional teacher of English needs to know about English in order to be able to make a professional assessment of the the difficulties her students experience, and in order to be able to devise exercises to help her students select an appropriate form on a particular occasion. It may be that the teacher cannot force the student to learn the form, but no-one has yet said she cannot help the student to use it appropriately. It is not enough for a teacher of English simply to be able to use English herself, she also needs, in a technical sense, to know about English. The first requirement for a

professional teacher of English must be that she knows about the formal structures of English - semantic, syntactic, morphological, phonological and graphical - and the discoursal use of those forms. It seems extraordinary that in the mid 1980s it is still necessary to reiterate arguments which were being made 30 years ago, when professionalism in EFL was first developing.

2 PROFESSIONALISM AND GRADING

There is also, it seems to me, a further area where one might expect professionalism from a language teacher. And it is one which again stresses the professionalism of the teacher's role in developing the students' experience of the target language. In most areas of teaching, a fundamental principle is the principle of grading, in the sense that the student is required to do easier, simpler tasks before he does more difficult ones. In learning to play the piano, it is easier for most pupils to learn to control the movements of one hand at a time before they try with two hands together. In learning to sew, one begins with plain stitches. In learning arithmetic ones learns to add small numbers to begin with. Can it be the case that in teaching a foreign or second language, we can afford not to pay attention to this fundamental teaching principle?

If we accept that it would be good pedagogical practice to present easier material before more difficult material, we then have to determine what it is that's easier or more difficult. Although we no longer set out to teach language structures directly, it does seem as though materials writers use shorter less complex structures in beginners' courses, and only allow in really complex structures in advanced courses. To some extent, the heritage of all the work done on grading of linguistic structures in the context of the structural syllabus is still with us, though blurred. What else might we grade? It seems to me that if we are shifting into a paradigm that is based on students co-operating in performing tasks, we ought to have a good analytical grasp of what are easy tasks, what are more difficult tasks, and why.

There are some teachers who would argue that grading doesn't matter because a good teacher can make any material, any task, accessible to any learner. It is true that some talented teachers find this a particularly interesting challenge and they often are impressively successful, particularly with the top twenty percent of the ability range in the class, generally the group the teacher likes working with best. Even with teachers like this, I think there are two arguments against this position:

a) the perceptive student is usually quite well aware that he has only experienced the material which is actually too

difficult for him in a rather limited way - if he were presented with the same materials on another occasion he would probably still have difficulties with them;

b) it would seem sensible for the teacher to choose simpler materials in the first place, since they require less effort to make accessible to the student, and the student emerges feeling more confident of being able to manage on his own.

The arguments for using graded materials include at least the following points:

a) if a student encounters an easier task first, he has a greater chance of success in the task (Brown, Anderson, Shillcock & Yule 1984);

b) if the student finds that task easy to succeed in, and the teacher knows what constitutes a more difficult task, the student can appropriately proceed to the more difficult task;

c) if the student has difficulty with the easy task, and the teacher has some analysis of where the problems in the task lie, the teacher can diagnose the student's problem and give him specific practice in overcoming that type of problem before he proceeds to a more difficult task;

d) if the teacher knows that a particular task has been developed to promote a particular skill, the teacher can make a judgement about whether or not, or how far, the student is successful with respect to that skill.

In fact, as soon as we seriously reintroduce the concept of grading, we recapture also those other notions which we used to find in language teaching: the ability of the language teacher to construct diagnostic tests to look for difficulties, and the professional ability of the teacher to diagnose a student's problems and to take steps to help him.

What I am suggesting then is this: if we are going to use a task-based methodology in our teaching, then we need to take the notion of TASK seriously. We need a proper analysis of task types and what is required to succeed in performing a task.

3 GRADING AND ANALYSING THE CONTENT OF TASKS

If we want to be able to grade tasks in order of difficulty we have to be able to analyse them, to find out what they consist of. In order to find out what a task consists of we need to have a clear notion of what 'success in performing a task means'.

Suppose we have a task where one student (A) has a picture of a fort in front of him and he has to tell a second student (B), who can't see A's instructions, how to construct this fort from the pile of toy bricks which B has in front of him. Now, one measure of success would be whether or not B succeeds in building a fort that looks like A's picture. Note that B's success in building the fort would arise not simply from A's instructions, but from B's ability to understand what A is saying, however poorly A is expressing himself, together with B's ability to guess quickly what sort of structure it must be that he is supposed to be building. 'Success' in this sense would give the teacher no insight into what particular problems of expression A might have or what particular problems of comprehension B had - 'success' (or partial failure) would have to be globally attributed to the pair of them. All that we can hope from a task specified in terms of co-operative pair end-product is that it gives the pair an opportunity to practise some sort of speaking and understanding in the foreign language. It doesn't give us any analysis of what problems either of them might have.

We could however give the same task and specify 'success' in a different way. We could tape what A says and then analyse the tape with him and B, in order to see for instance whether A is using spatial expressions like 'to the left of', 'on top of', 'behind', etc, appropriately. We could look to see whether B interpreted the expressions appropriately. 'Success' would then be seen as either producing or understanding spatial terms appropriately. The same task could also be used as an exercise in using colour terms appropriately, if the bricks were all of different colours. The same task could be used as an exercise in using different shape and size terms appropriately, if the bricks were of different shapes or sizes.

Once the teacher has decided, in the light of her syllabus, what is the point of a task like this on any particular occasion, she can see how to construct a simple or more difficult task. The fundamental variables in a task of this kind are how many objects are there, how easily they can be indentified, and how complex are the relationships between them. If you keep the other variables constant, the fewer the objects involved the easier the task is. So it is easier to give instructions to build a fort with five bricks than with fifteen. It's easier if all the bricks are alike, because you don't then have to distinguish between them. If they are different, the fewer the differences the easier the task is. So you might begin, say, with just red and blue bricks. If the bricks are of ten different colours, not only does a lot more vocabulary have to be controlled, but a lot more precision is required in the locating of the different coloured bricks. Again, it is easier to refer to features which are fixed and unchanging (like colour) than

to features which are subject to change like 'the brick you used to hold the gateway up to begin with'. This brings us to relations - if you are building a fort, it is easiest to build just a solid wall because that only involves the relations 'on top of' or 'next to'. Once you start building a gateway, for instance, where you have to counter-balance bricks to bridge a gap, the spatial relationships are much more complex and much harder to specify.

Note that the areas of difficulty I am talking about here are not simply difficulties arising from 'not having enough vocabulary' or 'not having enough structures'. What we are talking about is increased conceptual difficulty. The increased difficulties will be found not only with students who are in the process of learning a foreign language, but also with students who are doing the task in their own mother tongue, where there is no question of them not controlling the relevant vocabulary or necessary syntactic structures. It is important then for the materials designer and the teacher to distinguish between a poor performance brought about by the conceptual difficulty of the task, and the poor performance brought about by lack of control of the foreign language. Typically a conceptually difficult task will require more complex language - but note that having the language won't guarantee a good performance in a difficult task. The student may be able to deploy all the vocabulary and structures needed for the difficult task in a range of easier tasks, but when faced with greater conceptual difficulty in a hard task, he may find that the language he comfortably controlled in easier tasks now eludes him - this is as true for students working in their mother tongue as for students working in a foreign language.

The type of task I have talked about so far is a static spatial layout. The sort of analysis you apply to the fort-building type of task can also be applied to a wide range of real life tasks involving manipulating objects in space - for instance laying out chairs in a classroom, arranging the furniture on a stage set, setting up a piece of equipment in a chemistry lesson, making a template in wood-work, constructing a wiring diagram, assembling machinery, laying out cards in a patience game, drawing the plan and elevation of a building. In all cases the task will be conceptually simpler if fewer objects are involved, if they are all readily identifiable and if the relationships holding between them are simple. A conceptually simpler task gives a student a chance to experience success in a task before moving on to a conceptually more difficult task.

So far I have talked of 'static' tasks where each object remains in the same position once it is placed there. A further parameter of difficulty which you can introduce is making the task DYNAMIC - introducing process into the task. In such a task the original objects no longer remain in their original places but move with

respect to each other. We now introduce temporal structure into the task, which will necessarily involve the control of language describing temporal relationships.

I shall describe dynamic tasks in terms of a type of task which we have explored extensively, the eye-witness description of an accident involving a number of vehicles where the listener has to draw up an insurance claim. Once again the fewer the objects, the easier the task - so a crash involving just two cars is a great deal easier to describe than one involving three, and we would all have difficulty, even in our own language, describing one involving five cars. Once again, the easier it is to identify the object, the easier the task. So if the objects are clearly different and can be called by clearly distinct, familiar names like 'bus', 'lorry' and 'tractor', that will be easier than describing an accident involving three identical grey cars which all have to be distinguished in terms of their relationship to the road layout (which changes), or their relationship to other cars (which also changes). We find that native speakers of English have considerable difficulty in doing such tasks even in English, simply because they do not use the past history of each vehicle in a consistent way - it is just hard to remember when you are simultaneously trying to give a complex account of changing relationships. It is absolutely inappropriate then to require such a difficult task of a student struggling with a foreign language.

You will see too that it is possible to construct a simple task in terms of spatial relationships where you have a straight road with two cars travelling in one direction and one in the other. You can then have a fairly simple temporal change where the car which is behind moves out to overtake the car in front and crashes into the car coming in the opposite direction. It is possible of course to construct much more complex spatial relationships involving T junctions, crossroads and traffic islands, with road markings and traffic lights all playing a relevant part, and much more complex temporal relationships where two different cars simultaneously, or nearly simultaneously, begin a dangerous manoeuvre.

The problem in dynamic tasks which involve a number of objects changing places with respect to each other, is keeping a clear track of which one is being talked about at a given time. The temporal structure can be made much more difficult to describe by having some of the objects reappear several times during the process or narrative or by manipulating the narrational point of view with respect to the action.

We have found that the best input for dynamic accounts is short snatches of video film - really short so as not to put too much of a burden on memory. Dynamic accounts can be given of a range of reports of accident types, crimes (pickpocketing, break-ins, bank

robberies), as well as of much more mundane reports of the way a particular machine works, how to get money out of a cash dispenser, how to make a lemon meringue pie, how to dye your hair safely, and so on. Just as REPORTS require a control of dynamic processes so do plans - how to organise one or two families getting away together on holiday, how to start up a stamp collectors' club, how to organise a sports day or a TESOL or BAAL convention. Again, I have illustrated task types with banal examples - the important point is to note the range of ordinary everyday information exchanges which can be analysed in a similar way. The same generalisations always hold - the difficulty of talking about something increases with the number of objects which have to be identified, how easy it is to identify them, and the complexity of the relationships between them.

Clearly there are other variables that could be added - relationships of causality already arise in the car crash type of task if you are asked to consider who was to blame for the accident. The task can be made more difficult for the speaker by giving him only part of the information and having him elicit other relevant information from a third party. This will be even more difficult for him if the third party's information is not absolutley compatible with his own. An analysis of many further features of different types of task could be developed.

I have talked only about the grading of tasks from the point of view of the student doing the major share of the talking. Obviously it is also possible to grade task difficulty from the point of view of the listener (see Brown forthcoming).

4 HOW TO USE GRADED TASKS

I do not want to suggest that the vast range of existing task types should be jettisoned and that we should start again from a purer, better understood base. Not at all. A very rich range of tasks is in constant use in TEFL classrooms (see for instance Littlewood 1981 or the excellent survey of tasks in Ur 1984). What I do want to suggest is that teachers should be provided with an analysis of where the conceptual problems in different task types are likely to arise. So if a teacher observes that a student has difficulty with a particular type of task, rather than simply saying 'try harder next time', or reminding him of vocabulary and structure which in some sense he already knows, the teacher can diagnose the problem the student is having, or at least narrow it down, and provide the student with some specific help. I am not suggesting either that all students should be obliged to move at the same pace through an inexorably graded syllabus. Clearly, some pairs of students may be able to progress rapidly in the foreign language to difficult tasks of the sort which will provide

difficulty for many adolescent native speakers speaking in their mother tongue. However, even highly gifted students will sometimes have problems of expression in a cognitively difficult task. If the teacher can see where the cognitively hard part of the task lies, she can help the student with the problem. Without such an analysis, she has no professional help to offer.

My particular concern in education is with providing means of helping students identified as academically less successful within the education system to perform better. In foreign language learning I believe it is often the case that such students are asked to perform tasks in the foreign language which they would have difficulty with in their own language. For such students it is essential that teachers have a clear understanding of what success in a particular task consists of; that is, an analysis which enables them to break the task down into its component parts, in a sense independently of the language which is required, and then to construct simple and intermediate versions of the same task so that students who are experiencing difficulty may make progress within a truly graded syllabus. It is time, it seems to me, that materials writers and teachers took a more professional view of this important area of methodology.

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2. 'The arm of the chair is where you use for to write' Developing strategic competence in a second language

Elaine Tarone

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We can see the record of many attempts to teach the 'spoken language' in various EFL/ESL textbooks published over the years. Early audio-lingual textbooks espoused the primacy of the spoken language, for example, and more recent 'notional-functional' textbooks aim to teach students how to perform a variety of oral communicative acts. But it is clear from such a survey of textbooks that different pedagogical goals may be subsumed under the general rubric of 'spoken language'.

In fact, all three components of communicative competence, as characterised by Canale and Swain (1980), seem to have been taken as pedagogical goals as various practitioners have taught 'spoken English'.

Consider, for example, the three exercises in Table One. Exercise A, to be performed orally, is teaching 'the spoken language'. But, more specifically, this exercise focusses on teaching students **to produce correct grammatical forms in their spoken language.** The aim of this sort of exercise is to develop GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE in the second language. Exercise B is from a more recent text. Clearly, this exercise is not primarily intended to teach grammatical correctness, but rather aims to teach students to produce 'spoken language' which is appropriate and polite. The aim of this sort of exercise is to develop SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE in the second language. Exercise C (from the same textbook as exercise B) is an example of a third type of exercise. Clearly, while the student is being given instruction in the use of 'spoken language' in exercise C, the primary aim of the exercise is neither grammatical correctness, nor situational appropriacy; the aim is to teach the student how to successfully perform a communicative act, in this case the act of successfully describing a referent so that the hearer can correctly identify it. Hence, the goal of this exercise is to improve STRATEGIC COMPETENCE: the ability to effectively perform communicative acts, such as successfully identifying intended referents. Strategic competence includes the ability to use communication strategies to make one's performance more effective by solving problems which may arise in the process of performing communicative acts.

Grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence have been

TABLE ONE

Three exercises

Exercise A: 'Yes' and 'No' response. (Samelson 1974.)

1: repeat: Question
Response
Question and response together

a) Did we arrive in the city? Yes, we did.
b) Were we travelling fast? Yes, we were.
etc

Exercise B: (Jones 1977).

...British people are often very polite in the way they ask questions - if you want to be more direct, you may appear to be very rude! Anyway, personal questions have to be expressed tactfully. here are some useful opening expressions we use to lead up to questions:

I wonder if you could help me? I'd like to know...
I wonder if you could tell me...
This may sound like a stupid question, but I'd like to know...
Something else I'd like to know is...

Discuss with your teacher when such expressions might be appropriate.

Exercise C: (Jones 1977.)

a) You may often have to describe an object, or a piece of equipment or a machine or a gadget to people. You may need to do this because your listener is unfamiliar with the object or because you cannot think of the name for it. In describing an object we often have to answer questions like these:
what size is it?
what shape is it?
what colour is it?
what's it made of?

b) Here are some objects and gadgets to describe. Try to give a sustained description, bearing in mind the questions suggested...

a suitcase	your national flag
an egg-timer	the Union Jack

proposed elsewhere as components of communicative competence (see, for example, Canale and Swain 1980, Tarone 1984, Yule and Tarone forthcoming), all three being important but different goals of second-language teaching. I have found this distinction to be a most useful one to use in evaluating attempts to help students develop spoken language skills in the ESL/EFL classroom. ESL professionals need to bear in mind that the three exercises we have just examined are designed to teach very specific and different sorts of of spoken language skills. Exercise C for example will not necessarily teach students to produce either grammatically correct utterances or situationally appropriate ones. It is designed only to teach students to effectively perform a certain kind of communicative act.

Each of the three components of communicative competence is extremely important as a goal in the ESL classroom. A student who has failed to develop competence in any one of these three areas cannot truly be said to be proficient in English. Yet it is only recently that ESL textbooks and curricula have begun to include sociolinguistic and strategic competence as goals of instruction in the classroom. Although we now see an increasing number of textbooks and scholarly articles advocating a 'communicative approach' to the teaching of English, many such materials fail to clearly establish the nature of the 'communicative skills' being taught. Are the new materials designed to teach sociolinguistic skills: formal and informal register, stylistic norms, politeness? Or are they designed to give the students guidance and practice in effectively performing communicative acts, quite apart from grammatical correctness or situational appropriateness? Newer textbooks often seem to make an unclear distinction between sociolinguistic and strategic competence as pedagogical goals; the goal of 'communication' is often simply not analysed any further, resulting in a haphazard, rather than a systematic development of communicative competence. So, for example, exercises apparently promoting skills in these two different areas may be printed side by side in the same lesson with no apparent discrimination made between them. Even when the goal of an activity is clearly defined, it is not always easy to evaluate whether that activity is particularly effective in achieving that goal.

It would seem important for teachers and textbook writers alike to recognise that strategic competence is an ability which is distinct from both grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, and to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom activities designed to foster it. To this end, in this paper I propose:

a) to describe some typical ways in which speakers perform their strategic competence, and
b) to suggest clear criteria for evaluating the usefulness

TABLE TWO

Language used to describe part of a Christmas tree:
NS: Native speaker NNS: Nonnative speaker

NS1	...three metal pieces about this long...about this wide..
NS2	...three sticks or bars that are metal that are curved...
NS3	...the three legs...
NS4	...three legs...
NS5	...three metal pieces which become the legs...
NNS6	...three same pieces that are the heat or you can say the feet...
NNS7	...has a legs...
NNS8	...three large objects to sustain the round object...
NNS9	...three long things...they has a special they have a special shape...
NNS10	...one part of this object...are going to use like legs..

of classroom activities designed to improve the ability of learners to perform their strategic competence in their second language.

Speakers draw upon their strategic competence when they attempt to perform communicative acts effectively - as when they successfully identify intended referents. To illustrate some typical ways in which speakers perform their strategic competence, let us consider two entities and the ways in which a group of individuals, both native speakers and nonnative speakers of English, referred to these entities in our study. Each speaker in this study was instructing a listener as to the proper procedure to be used in assembling an apparatus; the listener had to choose among three sequences of photographs the sequence which most closely approximated the instructions given.

Table Two reports some of the language used to describe part of a Christmas tree. A great deal of variability may be observed in the linguistic means used by both NS and NNS to realise this or any of the other acts of reference in our study. We believe that this is because strategic competence involves the ability to select an effective means of performing an act of reference, one which enables a particular listener to identify the intended referent. Thus, strategic competence is gauged not by degree of correctness (as with grammatical competence) but rather by degree of success, or effectiveness. Clearly, individuals may be able to successfully communicate their intended meanings without necessarily demonstrating a great deal of accuracy in target language linguistic form. Further, more than one linguistic form may prove to be successful under different circumstances, with different listeners. As the writer of exercise C points out, alternative

linguistic expressions (such as descriptions of objects) must be used in situations where a listener is unfamiliar with an entity or where the speaker 'does not know the name for it'.

In fact, we believe that the **range** of expressions available to any speaker will prove to be dependent on at least three factors:

the speaker's linguistic knowledge;
the speaker's knowledge of the world; and
the speaker's assessment of the listener's knowledge of the language and the world.

For example, air conditioner repairmen have knowledge about air conditioner parts which will allow them to refer to those parts far more effectively than those of us who are not familiar with the inner workings of air conditioners. Where the listener shares this knowledge, the repairman-speaker's effectiveness in referring to air conditioner parts will be relatively high; where the listener does not share this knowledge, the range of effective expressions available to the repairman-speaker is likely to be greatly reduced. The range must be further reduced when one or other of the interlocutors does not have an adequate mastery of the language itself, and thus does not know the relevant linguistic expressions.

Thus, when individual speakers perform their strategic competence in making acts of reference, we may expect to observe a range of linguistic expressions, and we may expect that range to be defined by at least the three factors listed above. We may expect these factors to come into play regardless of whether the speaker is a native speaker of English or a learner.

Now let us return to the linguistic expressions used in Table Two. In some cases, simple nominals were used ('three legs', 'three long things') but in other cases a range of more complex nominal expressions were used. It is important to observe that while the native speakers employed a range of referring expressions, and the nonnative speakers employed a different range of referring expressions, those ranges overlapped. In general, the data we have shows that a wider range of expressions is used by the NNS group, with more complex nominal expressions appearing in this group. Possibly the NSs were more in agreement as to the level of detail required to identify an object.

One difference between NSs and NNSs is to be found in the degree of specificity, or level of detail, required in the encoding of the message. In deciding what to include and what to leave out of a message, there seems to be a level of detail which members of the NS group all agree upon. NNSs may provide more, or less, detail than this. The strategy of 'over-elaboration', where NNSs give more detail than the NSs, occurred very frequently in our study (Tarone and Yule forthcoming). Examples of over-elaboration on the part of learners occurred when they had to refer to a 'tablet armchair' in

TABLE THREE

Descriptions of a 'tablet armchair': (i.e. a chair with a built-on desk top for writing on)

NS: native speaker NNS: nonnative speaker

NS1 ...her desk...
NS2 ...one of the front, desks...
NS3 ...on her...on her, ah, desk...
NS4 ...her desk...
NS5 ...where that girl was sitting...

NNS6 ...the...chair...
NNS7 ...the little table but eh what is the name of...the... in his chair...
NNS8 ...her table...
NNS9 ...a...chair...a desk...
NNS10 ...the arm, of the chair. The arm of the chair is when the, when you use for to write...

the course of narrating a story (see Table Three).

A good example of over-elaboration is NNS10's extended definition. Note that none of the NS group bothered to try and specify that this was a particular type of chair. On the other hand, there are areas where the NNS group provided less detail than the NS group. In another task, referring to steaming water being poured from a pitcher, for example, a group of NSs all referred to both the water and the container, while all the NNSs referred only to the water, and not to the container. This may evidence a form of avoidance among the NNS group - viz: avoid describing whatever you decide you don't have to describe - a possible attempt to simplify their speaking task. NNSs, then, need to learn what level of detail is required in order for a typical listener to identify an object, to ensure the success of the communicative act.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

We may assume that in some cases the speakers encountered a problem in referring to these entities. Some seem to have been searching for a more precise nominal expression than the one they ended up producing; we presume this in some cases because the

speakers tell us so, and in others because of hesitation and/or laughter on the part of the speaker, and a preponderance of more complex nominal expressions. In the research literature, the linguistic (and in some cases the non-linguistic) signals used by speakers in place of the more precise linguistic expression have been referred to as 'communication strategies'. But clearly, such communication strategies are a subset of the full range of linguistic expressions which may be observed when speakers refer to entities with the purpose of enabling listeners to identify them.

It is hard for the researcher to tell from the data in Tables One and Two whether any given speaker is using a communication strategy or not - i.e. whether the expression produced is precisely the expression the speaker desires, or whether it is a substitute for some other, more precise expression which the speaker would prefer to use. One way of establishing whether communication strategies have been used because of some lack of linguistic resources is to have individuals perform the same task in both their languages with the same interlocutor; where a speaker uses one linguistic expression in the native language, and some other expression in the L2, we might guess that the learner has used a communication strategy, in order to compensate for some deficiency in either his own linguistic resources for English or those of his listener. Another way of establishing the difference is to ask the speaker whether the referential expressions he used were in fact acceptable in communicating their intended meanings. This approach is fraught with other problems, notably lapses of memory on the part of the speaker, and the whole issue of whether speakers use strategies consciously or not.

Another approach, useful for the second-language teacher, is to avoid making any distinction at all between communication strategies and other sorts of referring expressions, but merely to note that there are simple and more complex such expressions, and to note any differences in the way NSs and NNSs perform the same task. Where differences are observed, there may be valuable teaching points to be found. After all, one of the goals of the teacher is simply to provide students with the linguistic resources they need to be effective in performing communicative acts. The pedagogical goal must therefore be to teach students both the relevant simple nominal expressions they are likely to need for particular tasks, and also the linguistic resources they need to use communication strategies. We would hope to provide students with enough of these linguistic resources that they can perform communicative tasks with the same degree of success as native speakers. What teachers want to avoid is clearly different behaviour on the part of NNSs - e.g. the abandonment of a message when the student does not know the word for the entity.

In spite of the difficulties involved in precisely defining the

phenomenon, there is no doubt that speakers often experience a problem when referring to entities, and that they resort to alternative means of identifying that referent. This is particularly common in attempts to communicate in a foreign language. Research on communication strategies has resulted in a number of taxonomies of typical types of communication strategies adopted in this situation, and one such taxonomy is provided in Table Four.

TABLE FOUR

A simple taxonomy of communication strategies (based on Tarone and Yule forthcoming).

Avoidance
- Topic Avoidance - the speaker tries not to talk about entities for which the desired expression is not known
- Message Abandonment - the speaker begins to talk about an entity but is unable to continue

Paraphrase
- Approximation - the speaker uses a simple nominal expression which shares enough features with the intended intended referential expression to satisfy a listener
- Word Coinage - the speaker makes up a new nominal expression to refer to the entity
- Circumlocution - the speaker describes the properties of the entity instead of naming it

Elaboration - the speaker builds redundancy into the message by by means of repetition, paraphrase and explication

Borrowing
- Literal Translation - a learner translates word for word from the L1
- Language Switch - a learner uses an L1 expression without translating

Appeal for Assistance - a speaker asks for the desired referential expression

Mime - the speaker uses nonverbal expressions

Obviously, some of these communication strategies will be more successful than others. The initial reaction of learners unused to dealing with problems in communication, is to avoid communicating

at all in such situations - and clearly such avoidance does not lead either to communication of intended meaning, or to the development of the resources needed to deal with future communication problems. Whether or not 'avoidance' is classified as a communication strategy depends on whether one has defined the notion of communication strategy as 'options for dealing with the problem' (which might include avoidance), or as 'alternative means of performing the communicative act' (which could not include avoidance). (See Tarone 1981.)

What sorts of linguistic resources are needed for the effective use of communication strategies? We may obtain a clue by looking at the strategies typically used by native speakers who are confronted by similar communication problems. On the whole - though not, as it turns out in Tables One and Two, - NSs are more likely than NNSs to use the strategies of circumlocution and approximation (Tarone and Yule 1983). These strategies require certain basic or 'core' vocabulary (see Carter 1982), and sentence structures useful for describing such things as shape, size, colour, texture, function, analogy, hyponymy, and so on. ESL students who are developing strategic competence will need to develop such linguistic resources. In our research we have found that even advanced ESL students may not be able to use terms such as 'end', 'topside', 'strap', or 'oval' - all useful expressions for describing entities. Certain linguistic expressions will prove to be useful again and again as similar exercises are repeated.

Given what we know about the nature of strategic competence, what sorts of classroom activities are likely to promote the development of strategic competence? Experience with elicitation tasks used in our research has led us to suggest the following criteria be used in evaluating any classroom activity designed to foster strategic competence.

First, students must be provided with carefully-designed communicative tasks. The teacher should choose a specific set of elicitation materials and avoid providing open topics such as 'tell me what you did during your holiday'. Since it is an important feature of strategic competence that the speaker is able to convey the intended meaning, then it is really necessary for the teacher to know what the speaker intends to convey. The teacher must therefore decide what the speaker is to describe or identify. It will then be a relatively easy matter for the teacher to determine the student's degree of success in the attempt to convey this very specific meaning. In addition to providing very specific topics, the teacher should ideally provide topics which lie both within and outside areas of the student's expertise. Such topics would provide speakers with practice in assessing a listener's expertise in some area of knowledge, and force them to resort to the use of

communication strategies in cases where referring expressions are not known, or not shared with the listener.

Second, the task must create a reasonable facsimile of communicative behaviour. Minimally, there must be a listener who does not already know the information being communicated. Asking the speaker to describe the Union Jack creates an odd situation for him. You are asking him to tell you what you can already be presumed to know. Furthermore, it is better if the listener is not an 'all-knowing' teacher. One of the key elements of strategic competence is the ability to assess the level of knowledge (of the world and the language) shared with one's partner. This obviously rules out a teacher. Next, it helps if the listener clearly has a need to know the information being communicated by the speaker. The listener then has a definite task to perform and a role to play in the communicative interaction. This sets up what is surely a more natural interaction than one in which the listener has no idea what her role is.

These criteria will now be used to evaluate exercises such as Exercise C, which seems to have the goal of promoting strategic competence. Exercise C fails to meet our second and third criteria: there is no recipient of the information whose knowledge must be assessed, and no obvious purpose for the communicative act. It is now clear what has to be added to make this exercise a better activity for promoting strategic competence.

The use of the type of classroom activity advocated here has two incidental, and, we feel, valuable effects for the language classroom. First, the task provides L2 learners with opportunities to produce extended spoken discourse in the second language. The speaker is put in the position of having to organise an extended message, and tailoring it to a particular listener for a particular communicative purpose. This exercise requires a performance which has much more in common with everyday communicative behaviour than the short phrases and single sentences typically produced in response to many classroom speaking exercises. Second, the task elicits language produced when the speaker is put in a position of concentrating on getting the message across rather than on getting the linguistic form correct. Thus, the teacher is provided with important information about the state of development of the learner's grammatical competence, information which may be useful on some future occasion when emphasis on linguistic form is at issue.

Given that appropriate classroom communication activities are provided, how ought they to be used? First, it is important to establish an objective baseline for performance on these tasks by asking native speakers of English to perform them. If our goal is to provide learners with the skills they need to perform their

strategic competence with the same degree of effectiveness as native speakers, then we need not some notion of ideal NS performance, but facts about the way NSs perform the same tasks. We may then be able to compare, for example, the level of detail provided by NSs and NNSs in describing objects.

Students should be provided with core vocabulary useful for the strategies of circumlocution and approximation, either by instruction before the tasks are undertaken, or by inductive instruction during the classroom exercise itself. In fact, while focussing upon the development of the students' strategic competence, it is most effective to use an inductive approach throughout with these tasks. One such approach might take advantage of evidence that individuals often perform speaking tasks like this better if they have previously played the role of listener (Anderson, Yule & Brown 1984). Thus, a few students might be asked to perform the task in pairs in front of the class, with the rest of the class observing, provided with copies of the listener's task. These classroom observers might be asked to arrive at their own assessment of the speaker's success in performing the task, and to list alternative expressions to the ones used by the speaker. Such a procedure would enable students to learn from one another as well as from their own speaking performances.

Another activity using an inductive approach would be to ask student observers to identify strategies which speakers use when they are unable to use a precise name for an entity, and to assess the degree of success of various strategies. Such an activity amounts to asking students to develop their own taxonomies of communication strategies - an exercise which might help them develop an awareness of the frequency with which communication problems arise in the real world, and the variety of linguistic resources available to speakers for the resolution of such problems.

Students should also be asked to assess the success of the initial strategy used by a speaker in performing, for example, an act of reference. Eric Nelson (personal communication) has hypothesised that certain initial strategies may be more effective and economical than others. In a classroom exercise where learners are asked to refer to objects so that listeners can identify them, these objects may be presented as **sets**: some objects are easier to identify when the speaker begins with expressions like 'It's a kind of....'; another set is best referred to with expressions like 'It's a part of...'; another group of objects seems easiest to identify in terms of function; and a final set of objects seems easiest to identify when the speaker initially identifies the 'associated circumstances' or 'context of occurrence'. Suggesting possible **best initial strategy**, or even sequences of strategies, seems to be useful in the second language.

Classroom activities which aim to teach 'the spoken language' must provide instruction and practice in all the components of communicative interaction. In this paper I have argued that we can do a better job of helping students to develop at least one of these components, strategic competence, by defining our goals more clearly than heretofore. I have summarised some research on the way in which NSs and NNSs perform their strategic competence in English, and I have outlined some criteria, based on that research, which will be useful in evaluating classroom activities designed to develop strategic competence.

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3. Language production – language contact: the significance of learners' speech

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It is one of our basic assumptions that the human production system is a unified one, that there are no fundamental differences between non-linguistic and linguistic processing, or between first and second language processing. Language production, of course, is only one facet of the human production system. If one assumes that under normal conditions this system is making full use of its capacity, and that it works sufficiently and rationally, one might expect that it develops and encourages the use of as many general processors as possible and as many peripheral knowledge sources as necessary. Analogy is the system's basic principle of making use of knowledge. Whenever possible, problems are understood and solved in terms of something else, as long as the system is ecologically efficient. This is what the first term in our title, LANGUAGE PRODUCTION, is supposed to allude to.

What about the second term, LANGUAGE CONTACT? Usually this term refers to the contact of two or more languages in society. But since language contact in society is a metaphor (there is no language contact outside the production systems of human beings who happen to think, listen, speak, read and write in more than one language) we take this term in the sense of interaction of different linguistic data in a common data base. The simple fact that human beings in all kinds of contexts all over the world know how to make efficient use of such a common data base proves that it cannot be as difficult as we linguists, or psychologists, or language teachers think it is. With the term LANGUAGE CONTACT, we are also aiming at the potential enrichment for the system that may result from such a common data base, and not at the interference caused by such contact and interaction.

Our main topic, the SIGNIFICANCE OF LEARNERS' SPEECH, therefore, attempts to envisage the importance of the study of second language learners' speech, and shed some light on the more general question of how language is produced. It is not the errors of learners, nor the linguistic description of learner language that we are interested in, but the possible knowledge about language production one may gain from looking closely at spoken language.

Producing a second language is not moving away from the starting point of one's primary language in the direction of a final goal,

the target language. It is making full use of the system's various knowledge sources, general and peripheral, gained in and through the acquisition of the primary language. It is also modifying and expanding the system in order to adapt it to the particular environment. Of course, errors occur while this is being done, just as plenty of errors occur in first language production. They reveal the inadequacies of the system's architecture. What makes them more interesting is that they are indicators of planning and processing disturbances. Since these processes occur in real time, the assessment of temporal variables additionally gives us access to the mechanisms of language production.

Newell and Simon (1972) have argued that the human production system varies along four dimensions, the phylogenetic, the individual, the time, and the task dimensions. The dimension of particular interest in this paper is the task dimension. The shape and structure of the task environment is responsible for a large part of the variance in the behaviour of individual systems. Different tasks demand different solutions from the system. Complex tasks place a heavy burden on the system's problem solving capacity.

The task environment provides the basic problem solving situation the human information processing system is confronted with. When we talk we normally do so in response to tasks - natural ones in everyday life, or elicited ones in experimental situations. The goal of a human subject in a verbalization task is to decode and understand its structure, adapt to it and solve it. If it is easy to handle, the solution will be easy; if its structure is complex, it must first be decomposed and analysed. Such a task may put stress on the subject, and this stress can cause the system to malfunction. Increased attention and additional mental effort are needed to overcome this. However, the mental capacity of humans is not unlimited, and additional work may require more time, or may manifest itself in disruptions of the speech production processes (Newell and Simon 1972; Levelt 1978).

Task stress is one factor which has a strong influence on language processing. High processing load resulting from a complex task will lead to processing problems, especially in the case of a second language. The retrieval of task specific schemata, the establishment of a complex referential network, the search for a conceptual frame of reference, and so on, may exert high stress on the system before linguistic planning takes place. An analysis of the cognitive complexity of a task may thus help to shed light on the stress responsible for errors and hesitations ocurring in linguistic attempts to solve the task.

In this paper, I shall be describing some attempts made by German-speaking learners of English to describe a simple cartoon

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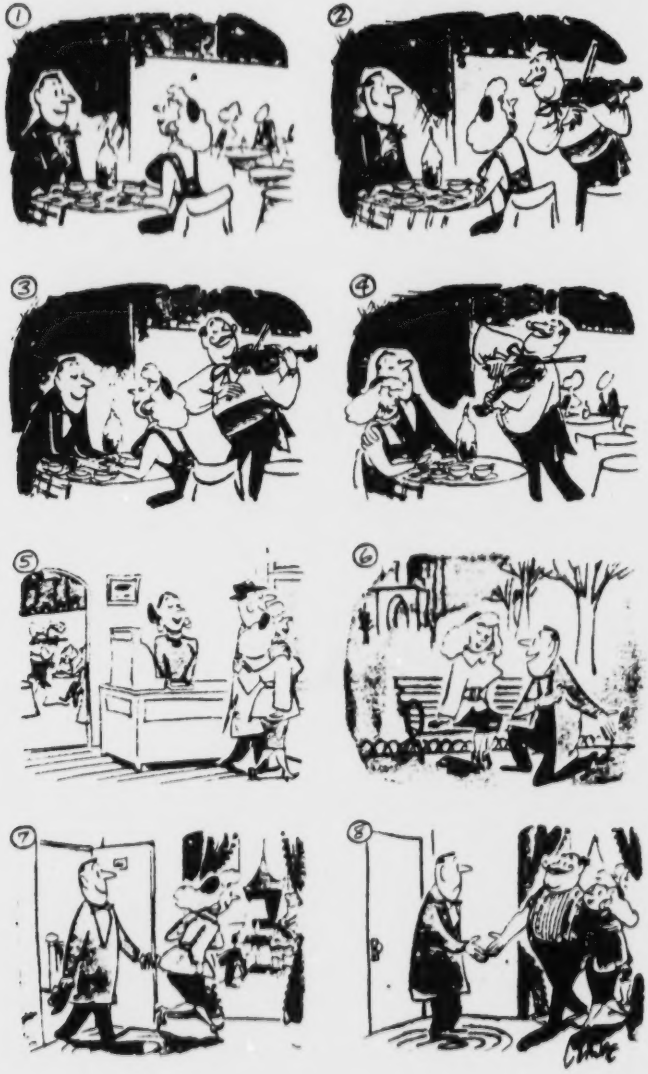

Drawing by Claude,
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Man and girl become engaged

(Figure one). The story consists of three episodes, each marked by a particular location: the restaurant, the park and the violinist's appartment. The first episode (frames 1-5) clearly fulfills the traditional function of introducing the place, time and main characters of the story. The second episode (frame 6), forms a sort of climax to the preceding action, and a quasi-resolution: the young man's proposal. The third episode (frames 7-8) contains 2 episodic units. The first (7) prepares the setting for the real resolution, or disillusion found in frame 8. This final complication is only a structural complication, however. The common goal is achieved in the end, however unexpected this may be for the young man. There is, in other words, a discrepancy between the anticipated story structure and the real course of events well-planned and executed by the violinist and his daughter. This discrepancy is reflected in the totally different perspectives of the three characters: the naive apperception of the innocent young man, and the scheming of the young woman and her father. This basic ambiguity results in a potentially ambiguous perception of the course of events. If the reader identifies with the young man, he is likely to be deceived until the end, and be confronted with the same problem as the young man. He does not know what is going on, or who is who. If the reader is smarter than the young man, and is not deceived by the fiddler, he will enjoy the game being played with him. In either case, the ambiguity of the cartoon puts a high processing load on the reader long before he starts to reproduce it verbally.

Throughout the cartoon, the reader is given the impression that the sequence of events develops quite steadily towards the goal of the action, the young couple's engagement. And this is actually what happens, but at the same time, the reader is deceived on purpose. It is not the OUTCOME of the story, the engagement, which causes surprise in the end, but the way in which something apparently spontaneous and natural turns out to have been planned and carried out by the violinist and his daughter. The story's supposed protagonist, the young man, has been trapped. He is in fact an antagonist suffering from his naivety.

The perception of the cartoon's problem-solving structure, development and final outcome quite evidently creates problems. The ambiguous structure causes potential collisions of schemata. In order to establish cohesion in the verbal reproduction of this cartoon, one has to decode its message starting with the final disclosure of the plot against the young man. One has to recognise that it is not a naive love story, but a crime story.

In addition to this particular cognitive task stress, our subjects seemed to have another particular psychological problem. Their immediate identification with the young man's (or young couple's) point of view, the choice of his (or their) perspective prevented

them from discovering the signals in the cartoon that might have led them in a different direction. That a young girl in collaboration with her father might try to trick a young man into engagement was quite obviously such a farfetched schema that none of our students was able to work with it. For this reason, the comparatively easy discovery that the violin-player was the girl's father actually proved very difficult. Most of our subjects, in the face of these difficulties, tried to solve the problem they ran into in the final episodic unit by making a seduction story out of it. They had the young man meet the young woman's husband in the couple's appartment. The cartoon surprisingly turned out to be a projective test revealing personality traits of our subjects which influenced their solutions to our task, and these lay beyond our particular interest in first and second language speech production.

However, important though these psychological variables may be, the task of verbalising this cartoon, and the difficulty of decoding its hidden structure presupposes the possibility of proceduralised units of speech in order to gain time and energy for an overall fluent solution of such a complex job. As we have shown elsewhere (Dechert 1983), establishing a sound referential network reflecting the story's configuration and interaction of the main characters is a first step towards establishing structure and coherence. This is exactly why the cartoon's ambiguity as to real or supposed protagonist-antagonist configuration exerts a severe task stress. The solutions to this task that we collected in our corpus represent a wide range of possibilities. There are linguistically acceptable first language accounts which completely fail to reproduce the story's causal connection of events. There are linguistically poor second language accounts which nevertheless give evidence that the story's structure and message were understood. There is, in other words, a wide variety in speakers' ability to comprehend and reproduce stories under conditions of high task stress.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This analysis looks in detail at the retelling produced by a single subject, W. W's protocol is reproduced in Table One.

Each episodic unit of the story contains between six and twelve basic propositions. Altogether there are about seventy, evenly distributed over the whole cartoon, with the exception of the first unit where the information is naturally more dense. W's retelling contains one addition to the cartoon (1.11), and no really important item of information is omitted. From a propositional point of view, the reproduction is an almost perfect selection of the cartoon's important information.

TABLE ONE

SPEECH SAMPLE PRODUCED BY AN L2 SPEAKER, W.

Total speaking time	98.44 secs	
Articulation time	44.88 secs	
Pause time	53.56 secs	(typical for an L2 speaker)
Speech rate (syll/min)	112.0	(good for an L2 speaker but much below the L1 rate)
Articulation rate (syll/sec)	4.1	(very good for any speaker)
Number of syllables	183.0	
Number of pauses	50	
Mean length of runs (no. of syllables between two pauses)	3.59	(good for an L2 speaker but much below the L1 rate)

a man (.) and a woman are sitting in a (0.20) restaurant // (2.40) then (0.36) a Hungarian style (0.64) [vi'a:nou] player (0.24) uh ['vialin] player comes to the table (0.44) and plays with great pleasure / (1.16) so that (1.56) both man and woman (0.48) are (0.88) amusing themselves // (1.60) and (0.72) [coughs] suddenly they come closer (1.20) the (0.44) woman (1.64) sits (1.52) very close to (0.20) the man (0.32) and they are (0.76) uh (1.36) deeply content / (1.72) then they pass (0.20) the cashier (.) and (1.36) go into a park / (0.88) where the (0.24) wife sits on a bank and (0.84) the man (0.56) uh (3.00) says something to her (.) may be (0.60) they talk about marriage / (1.92) on the next (0.40) uh (.) picture (2.64) the (2.24) man and woman are entering a room / (0.80) where some people (0.56) are sitting // (1.64) and (2.88) the last picture shows (2.32) the wife coming (0.80) uh: (0.44) out of this room, (2.36) with this (0.56) Hungarian style (0.44) ['vialin] player (1.04) and (2.04) it seems to be (0.56) her father which (0.44) uh: (0.20) congratulates (1.32) his (0.44) son-in-law /

An analysis of the temporal variables of the whole reproduction provides some useful insights into the reproduction process. The amount of pause time (54.41% of the total production time) is quite typical of an L2 speaker; the speaking rate is also below the average for L1 speakers, though quite impressive for an L2 speaker. What is amazing is the articulation rate of 4.1 syllables per second, which is good for any speaker. This means that W needs some time to plan what he is going to say, but when he speaks he does so in a comparatively fluent way. This finding is confirmed by the figure for average length of run, i.e. the number of syllables between two pauses. Although 3.59 is well short of native speaker competence, it is not bad at all for an L2 speaker.

W's attempts to understand and verbalise the cartoon story demonstrates a certain sense for details. He immediately recognises that the violinist is Hungarian; he notices the cashier at the end of the first episode; he attempts - though with little success - not to restrict himself to a simple chronological listing of events, but to catch some of the cartoon's atmosphere and emotion. He is one of the few of our subjects who is not deceived by the cartoon's inherent love-story schema. He debunks the violinist's dirty trick, and there is even a sense of humour and irony in his language when he concludes the story with the words 'congratulates his son-in-law'.

In spite of this, W's reproduction clearly reveals an evident lack of competence to really express what he knows and what he wants to say. There are severe vocabulary problems, such as the lack of the word 'violinist'. There is interference from his native German, as in '(they) are amusing themselves'. There is the desperate search evident in line 6, for a word such as 'cuddle', 'caress' or 'fondle'. Quite obviously his vocabulary is remarkably inferior to his knowledge of the world. This passage suffices to show that W's problem is not the conceptualisation of the event, not the syntactic structuring of his utterances, but his lack of words and his inability to paraphrase what he cannot put into words. His constant search for words and their collocations is the main reason for his pausing and hesitating throughout his production. There are also elementary fossilisations such as 'bank' for 'bench' and 'wife' for 'woman' (from German Bank and Frau), and other German transfers like 'on the next picture' (from German 'auf dem Bild').

What does work for W is his ability to tell a story: the introduction of protagonist and antagonist, the brief but adequate description of the setting, the use of chronology, the marking of the beginning of episodes and episodic units. For an advanced learner who has acquired a story telling competence in his L1, retelling a story in a second language is an easy task, as far as metalinguistic analysis and synthesis of the story's structure is concerned. The more concept-driven it is, the easier it is. The

more complicated part of the job is the search for proper words and collocations, but this can be made easier if the speaker can rely on a minimum of proceduralised lexical units, words, and formulas (Dechert 1984). Where such units are not available, as in W's search for a word to describe the violin-player, disfluencies and speech errors are likely to result (1.3-5). Where such units are available, speech tends to be more fluent. In W, this shows up in such 'islands of reliability' as the phrase 'a man and a woman'. Islands of reliability are syntagmatic units which are easily accessible on all levels of processing, and are widely used to gain time and save energy for declarative search processes around them. They are also used, as in W's text, to establish a network of relations. W's text reveals that variants of 'man and woman' are spread all over the text, and add to it a considerable degree of linguistic and cognitive stability.

CONCLUSION

Little is known about the cognitive development of advanced learners. We do not know much about the processing of languages by advanced learners either. There are more questions than answers.

The processing of a language has certainly got to do with the task environment to which the system responds. If the task is complex, the system will experience stress, and this stress will cause competition and disturbance in the system. There will be errors in the system's output.

The processing of a second language has got to do with the metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge acquired in L1. Every single procedure in the system's architecture that may facilitate second language processing will be activated. Syntactic knowledge, for example, in the case of similar languages like English and German, need not be acquired anew. When two languages are SVO languages, very little must be learned about word order.

What seems to be the real issue in advanced second language processing is the lexicon. Proceduralised linguistic units: words, collocations, formulas which are immediately available and accessible have an important function, so that the system may concentrate on the search for and retrieval of declaratively stored linguistic knowledge. There are, of course, stages in the proceduralisation of linguistic units. There is the even more interesting question of what the candidates for proceduralisation are. Are they universal or language specific?

These questions, we guess, will be exciting issues in future second language processing research.

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4. Towards an alternative model of second language learning

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In this paper I want to question what the concepts of 'natural' development to a 'target language' might mean, and whether these concepts are useful ones for the purpose of research into language processes in the classroom. I shall suggest that a social rather than a psycholinguistic framework would be more useful for studying language processes for educational purposes. Throughout, I will suggest applied linguistics cannot be a neutral science. Following Dewey, I want to show that 'any enquiry into what is deeply and inclusively human enters perforce into the specific area of morals. It does so whether it intends to and whether it is even aware of it or not' (Dewey 1950, p20).

I need to begin by clearing some ground about alternative interpretations of 'natural development', to ask if we have to see language development as a natural process within the dominant paradigm presented by Chomsky.

There seem to be two senses in which we might use the term 'natural development', and these two senses need to be distinguished. In one, the 'input' is relevant. This is the development of the ability to use English without the formal teaching of grammar. (I shall concentrate on the learning of English to avoid confusion between concepts of learning language and learning a language.) In this, learning English remains a social process; one learns from people, but not from drills, grammar books or structures on the blackboard. In this, the sort of English one uses reflects the people one is among. In the second sense, the type of 'input' is irrelevant. 'Natural development' is a sort of maturational process, the unfolding of an innate language ability so that English 'grows', given some exposure to English in the environment.

An analogy is with physical development. The body will grow provided it is given food, but the surface structure of the body has nothing to do with the surface structure of the food - it has its own genetic blueprint. So the logical structure of the particular language will emerge despite 'performance' variations. However, the logical structure of this language would not necessarily mean standard English, or 'native speaker norms'. Even Chomsky's 'cancer theory' of language, like many cancer theories,

suggests environmental triggers for particular instances of language growth. We all develop Language, but in doing so acquire particular languages. The particular language we acquire from the environmental triggers provided may be what is called an 'interlanguage', for 'interlanguages should be considered no more deviant than ordinary grammars; they, too, are based on properties of the human mind' (Cook 1985, p13). Although the environment may not provide **sufficient** evidence to learn a language, it does at least provide the positive evidence **necessary** to help the learner fix the ways the universal principles of grammar apply to the actual language learned. So, the forms acquired by the learner will depend on the language used around the learner, by the people s/he observes and the social practices in which they are engaged. Whether this acquired language is classified as a language, a dialect, an accent or indeed, an interlanguage, is a social issue dependent on political and theoretical positions taken up at that paticular time (Corder 1973, p53).

So, it seems that even in an innatist paradigm, 'natural development' of English has the first sense I mentioned; learning English remains a social process, not a maturational process in which type of 'input' is irrelevant. One has a choice, then, of whether to focus on innate processes or to focus on social influences.

Now let us turn to the concept of the 'target language'. Although for theoretical purposes Chomsky may work with the norms of the 'ideal speaker-hearer in the homogeneous speech community', these norms may in practice be those of a single idiolect. Chomsky gives no reason for supposing (and there are many reasons for not supposing) that there are any such norms for any particular language. So, how can we talk about the 'natural' progression of learners towards the 'target language'? Comparing learner language with 'native speaker norms' or 'target norms' can **only** be evaluative, not nomological. Downes (1984) clarifies this issue: 'From one perspective language is a dynamic process, a continua in many dimensions. From another, it is an institutional entity deeply identified with the life of a society, and intricately involved in both its political and historical development and its social structure. In this view, the language is a codified set of norms in which the ongoing processes of variation and change are partially repressed from general social consciousness' (p37).

It is this repression of variation, and construction of a unified, yet deeply dividing, codified set of norms as a 'natural' standard that is one of the main themes of my paper. However, I wonder if we CAN separate the two perspectives as Downes suggests. The way we look at language is itself deeply identified with the life of society, and coloured by socio-historical preoccupations. Perhaps I need to stress that these so-called 'norms' are rarely

statistically assessed nor reached by consensus and agreement. They may be instituted accidentally, by, for example, the technological requirements of the printing press; they may be imposed officially, as standard French was imposed by the Académie Française (Balibar 1974 explores the history and ideological implications of that move interestingly); or by the historically dominant group over a period of time, reflecting both speech community norms and valued cultural traditions. Hymes (1974) says that linguistics, like grammar, is an 'instrument of hegemony'. The study of rules of usage and the rules of use, like those rules themselves, is socio-historical.

In second language development research, the status of the norm has always been blurred. Second language research has concentrated in its studies of children's second language acquisition, on the children of the researchers themselves, or those of their 'speech community', just as many L1 studies have done (cf. Hatch 1978) The target language was then transparently shared by learner and researcher, as the only model the child had access to. Research into adult learners and children in schools seems to have adopted unquestioningly the same 'norms', the linguistic usages of 'standard English' as set out in the idealised grammar, and the communicative strategies of the researchers' speech communities.

Second language research has always been closely connected to the second language classrom, although often uncritical of its practices. Its interests are empirical in the sense that Habermas defines as directed to interest in technical control (cf Giddens 1976). Its implicit purpose is to 'improve' the method of learning a language; that is to bring the learner to a predetermined 'standard' of a language. While this may be a legitimate 'selection from the culture' for a syllabus, in research it legitimises one particular variety of the language. It seems to have adopted the pedagogic norm (Littlewood 1981) as the norm against which development processes are observed, frequently conflating this with 'native speaker norms' and 'the target language' (ie. the language the learner is supposed to be aiming for). In the formal classroom context, the dominant norm would be the pedagogic norm, conveniently listed in the grammatical and/or functional syllabus, both idealised descriptions of the language abstracted from a generally unspecified speech community. Like any syllabus, this is an explicit or implicit 'selection from the culture' (Lawton 1978) and, as such, should be open to public debate and change.

Corder (1973) stressed that the variety of language offered as the classroom model should be chosen on the basis of politico-social factors as well as its communicative potential for satisfying learners' purposes. However, once established and legitimised, the language of the classroom is actually 'produced', BECOMES the language of the classroom, as only progress towards its norm is

observed, and it is evaluated in the syllabus' own terms. Rose (1980) has produced a fascinating study to show how language is socially constituted, produced differently, at different times for different groups. She shows how at the same period of time, language in education meant classics for the rich, literature for the middle classes, and clear expression for the poor, this ideology enshrined in separate but concurrent educational policies. Language as a tool of thought for one group and language as the acquisition of a system of structures for another, within the same school, can be seen closer to our own time in the Bullock Report (Bullock 1975). Corder (1973) said that the answer to the question 'What is Language?' should be 'What do you want to know for?'. This might be better rephrased 'Who do you want to know for?'

If language is socially constituted and produced differently in schools at different times, through the practices of evaluation and monitoring and in the types of task set, then children's use and awareness of language seems likely to reflect these practices, and so also to differ historically. In this sense again, language development is not natural. Certainly, as researchers, our perceptions of children's language will be altered by our theory of language. This suggests that the context to which we appeal to interpret children's utterances must include a critical analysis of the network of theories which influence the interpretation of the situation, and the sociohistorical situation in which the utterance takes place. What I am suggesting is that we make the language we find, by our way of observing and evaluation. Rose warns that defining language as 'natural' works to 'syphon off the more urgently needed recognition of social divisions and conflicts' in which education takes place. Paradoxically, for researchers who advocate 'natural acquisition', once research moves out of the formal second language classroom into an apparently natural learning environment, the notion of the 'natural development' of the English language becomes more puzzling.

I need now to describe briefly a classroom context that I have worked in. This is a primary school classroom, where the children have contact mainly with just one teacher. The room is broken up into small areas, making small private spaces where the children sit around tables in groups of two to six. There is a square carpet in the centre of the room where the children come together with the teacher for class discussions and stories. There are 29 children in the classroom. They are 8 to 9 years old, so in Piaget's terms, they would mostly be in the stage of concrete operations. 21 are bilinguals in the sense of using at least two languages in their daily lives. Three languages are heard in the classroom: Bengali, Cantonese and English. Twelve children speak Bengali; seven speak Cantonese; seven are monolingual in English, but one of these is bi-dialectal. Other languages known but not spoken are Pushtu and Farsi. Two children say they have known but forgotten Vietnamese;

one says the same about Finnish. Many children learn Arabic after school. Many of the children are skilled at mimicking their peers, the teacher and characters on TV. Their teacher is monolingual in English, but is not local and uses North of England dialect features and idioms in informal talk. A Chinese/English bilingual teacher works in the classroom once a week, with mixed groups of children. Seven of the children have been in England for less than two years. Six children have been in the school since the nursery.

Given free choice, the children tend to move into shared language and sex groupings, although these operate bilingually. However, the social scene is flexible, with best friends, quarrels, rivalries and alliances - and most groups have at least one 'language outsider'. However, Bengali and Cantonese do not seem to be acquired, or picked up by other language users, although there is a lot of 'comprehensible input' linked to concrete operations - the tasks at hand. Some children know some 'rude words', numbers and words about festivals that have been taught in class projects (e.g. Chinese New Year, Eid). The Bengali and Cantonese communities are numerically large and well-established in the area. Most bilingual children atttend community language classes out of school. However, most children say they use English at home as well as in school, usually speaking English at least part of the time with siblings and friends. I frequently heard English used among children even in their community language classes, and their teachers confirm that this was not just because of my presence. The work setting is carefully organised by the teacher into mixed language, mixed sex and to some extent, mixed ability groupings. Children have their own place at special tables, to which the teacher gives a lot of thought. The main areas of work are maths, reading and project work, which involves drawing, discussing, painting, writing and model making, and each project extends over a number of weeks and links up with a theme running right through the year. All the children do the same work, usually individually.

There is no obvious fixed and focussed 'pedagogic norm'. The teacher believes the best way to teach English is 'not to teach it'. She believes children pick it up from one another. Children's spoken English is never corrected, and neither is their written English, although the teacher regularly asks them to read parts back to her aloud and if they self-correct, the teacher 'draws their attention' to the written form.

Language is not problematic in this classroom. The teacher rarely discusses it. The children speak in their own voices. Language development is not seen as producing correct structures either in spoken or written English, but as communicating meaning, participating effectively in activities, interacting, finding a place in the social groups. In fact, incorrect formulations can be seen as creative and imaginative, and preferred to standard

expressions, seen as dull and common-place. However, although pedagogic linguistic norms are not fixed, there are other norms firmly established in the classroom, of behaviour in contexts, of presentation of work, of routines and of social relationships. There is a common classroom culture which it took an outsider time to penetrate.

This is just one rough picture of some aspects of this classroom, to make one rather specific point. I want to ask how can we speak of natural development to the target language in this situation?

Some applied linguists may want to wash their hands of this situation, pleading 'submersion', 'junky data', 'pidginisation' or 'fossilisation'. I want to avoid this L1/L2 normative debate. What this situation does for me is to call the whole notion of one target language, and the notion of natural development to a unitary natural language into question.

The sociolinguist Le Page has written (1978) of societies as producing focussed or diffuse norms. The homogeneous FL clasroom would seem to be an environment based on focussed linguistic and cultural norms, the primary multi-lingual classroom I have described offers diffuse norms. These focussed or diffuse norms, Le Page says, are realised in invariable or variable grammatical forms. In a diffuse society, learners may not have access to one distinct set of shared norms. Rather, each individual in a community observes the behaviour of the others, 'extrapolating from observed variability towards various idealised models with invariable rules' (1978, p10). These models match real group norms to the extent that the individual has access to observation of that group. In the clasroom, then, one can no longer assume that the teacher's language is the target language, nor that there is a single target language. The crucial issues for both participants and analysts are: which are the norms providing the standard of correctness towards which the speakers are orientating themselves; why are they selecting these in particular, and how does this choice affect the way we should inerpret the utterance as a whole?

The important issue for this paper is that grammatical realisations appear to be encoding not only differences between possible socal groupings, but also differences in the way a speaker can take up a position in discourse within or in opposition to these social groups. The form, the meaning and the subject who speaks are no longer separate. The social position the speaker takes up marks the form and adds to the meaning.

Children producing these forms seem then not only to be reflecting social structure and self-identity, but actually to be producing the social structures and personal identities within the classroom. But I think we can go further than this. The feedback that children

receive through language suggests that both meanings and forms are being acquired together in the classroom, and that these meaning/form pairs are unlikely to match exactly those of others, only progressively approximating to those of others when one has had close access to them in a shared lifestyle.

This is a distinctly different view from the usual telementation model underlying much applied linguistic theory, of predetermined concepts held inside the head of some fixed, unitary ego and 'encoded' for transmission to another fixed thinking being, who then 'decodes' the 'message' back into fixed concepts using a shared code. Harris (1981) has offered a cogent criticism of this fixed code fallacy from a linguist's point of view, and has recently received philosophical support from Baker and Hacker (1984) who argue that the language system resembles not so much a logical calculus as a road system, growing, changing, incidental, accidental, certainly historical: 'it is certainly open to us to look at a natural language as a loosely integrated normative practice, a motley of rules on a par with the common law' (p375).

If language is seen as located in space and time, like a road system, historically, the synchronic axis at any time would be less of a distinct, systematic cross-section than a more flexible system of differences; some stereotypes of persons, concepts, ways of using language would have been formed, but as systems of relations, or differences between uses, rather than as distinct sets of variable systems. This person is like this, as opposed to that; this form/meaning is found in this sort of text, but not in that; used in this context, not that; used by people like me, used by people not like me.

It seems to me possible that using a model of language development based on meaning/form pairs or lexical differences, we would not need to make a deep first language/second language division, but could see later languages developing as part of a differential language use with certain persons in certain contexts, carrying some distinct meanings developed in those contexts. There is also the possibility of exploring and possibly resolving the present problem of defining the 'learner' in my multi-lingual situation. There are many bilinguals in my classroom. Who are the second language learners? Is possessing a language an inheritance, a state of grace? Or is the L1/L2 difference one of proficiency (Stern 1983)? If so, at what point may I say that I have acquired the language? For if I am to say English is only acquired when children function successfully in the classroom, then what do I call those monolingual English speaking children who are not successfully dealing with the linguistic demands being made on them in class?

Child development theorists (e.g. Kessel et al. 1983) have begun to query whether early experience is as crucial as has been thought.

They suggest that human beings are epigenetic, not just getting larger (more of the same), but structurally elaborating on themselves, changing and developing throughout their lives. It seems time we took epigenesis seriously. Language acquisition in anything more than a crude morphological sense does not end in the years before school. We need to allow in our theory of language for the taking on of new styles, dialects and languages throughout our lives, not as distinct systems, but as an integrated system of choices. What a critique of fixed code theories suggests is much closer attention to language use in context. Context here is no longer the objective, transparent ground appealed to, to justify an interpretation of an utterance, but language and context become mutually determining. The view of language that is emerging here is one where forms and concepts are seen as produced together in relation to the positions taken up in discourse by the speaker. Rather than a natural development regardless of context, the social practices in which language is used would be crucial for its development.

This social perspective on language seems to be supported by changes in recent cognitive development research which is looking at the development of thought not as an isolated psychological phenomenon, but as an interactive process. The Piagetian 'natural' model of cognitive development on which much of the rhetoric of primary school practice is based, has come under increasing fire as a cultural rather than a natural construction (Donaldson 1978, Walkerdine 1982, Kessel 1983). It appears increasingly likely that the level of formal operations is not an inevitable target, but the result of the experience of a particular way of upbringing and schooling. More than that, it seems likely that language plays a vital interactive part in the development of concepts and most particularly, the practices of literacy (Vygotsky 1962, 1978, Donaldson 1978, Walkerdine 1982, Olsen 1977).

Problem solving has come to be seen as something which is distributed across individuals, rather than something that happens inside individuals, and learning is being redefined as a shift in the distribution of responsibility for completing a task. Following Vygotsky, development is 'the change in the locus of regulation of joint activity between people in which the more knowledgeable person can be said to be seeking to shift responsibility for parts of the interaction to the child, while the child seeks to master as much of the activity as possible'. In this framework, it is clear that performance precedes competence. Furthermore, the framework clearly implies that 'development' is defined in relation to implicit social norms; i.e. the assumption that adult ways are more 'advanced' is replaced by a more explicit recognition of their being more efficient for certain socially valued techniques or operations.

Moving even further away from a non-interventionist, natural development position, Francis (1983) suggests that children may need actually to be persuaded to give up or at least modify their personal knowledge and ways of understanding to meet the conventional public forms of the classroom. Education, she implies, although speaking here specificly of reading, is the process of making the breakthrough from personal knowledge based on limited experience to the freedom of the public range of ways of knowing and communicating.

Relying on natural development, it seems, may limit access to publicly valued modes of thought and expression. Instead of explicitly denying access to educational goals, Bernstein suggests that the provision of schooling which treats educational goals as natural rather than as cultural developments will locate failure to achieve these goals in the children themselves. Schools have always had a selective function. This function can be masked by a pedagogy which appears developmental, but which continues to evaluate performance by a set of norms which are not made explicit to the learners. Only those who share the knowledge of the valued norms will be able to succeed. Sharp and Green (1975) explore the application of this theory in the primary school.

From this perspective, the nurturing classroom which naturalises development is a place of covert evaluation, which produces learners at different levels of competence. From a structuralist perspective these levels are produced largely according to whether the children's backgrounds match the teachers', i.e. whether they share focussed norms. From a more recent perspective (Walkerdine 1983), the situation is more complex, and focussed norms are achieved by the ways in which children and teachers position themselves within the social practices of the classroom, rather than directly determined by social structures. Nevertheless, the classroom remains a place where children are ordered and graded. From both these standpoints, these differences in level are not the teachers' responsibility, and do not reflect on their professionalism or ideals, for language development is an internal process, and differences in achievement are located in the personal characteristics of the learner (aptitude, motivation, attitudes).

I think that we must reject this view. I hope I have shown here that there is no such thing as a 'natural' rather than a social language. There can be no natural development to a cultural norm.

The learner centred/teacher centred dichotomy is limiting and misleading. To enable learners to succeed in the cognitive tasks adults have decided are valuable enough to put children in school for, to be learner centred in this sense, is to offer alternative 'texts' linked to familiar practices, to move from established interests to new interests, to develop what Kristeva calls

'intertextuality', the ability to call on and combine a range of models, to draw on a 'mosaic of quotations', to develop new forms and meanings together in new practices, and so to extend and alter the network of meaning/forms already acquired in different domains.

This is to see language development as an intermental social process, closely connected with the development of thought, but also closely connected with the cultural processes and practices of the society. It seems to me that although we have a growing body of examples of practice, in developing and assessing interactive cognitive and linguistic tasks in the framework of classroom practices, we have no theory or research framework for studying them which takes seriously intermental process and the wider context, including the socio-historical background of utterances in which speakers take up positions in the language.

It is crucial that language and cognitive development be seen to reflect the opportunities and support given for participating in what Francis calls the public range of ways of knowing and communicating if educational inequalities are not to be perpetuated. Equally, it is essential to re-evaluate the criteria for evaluation which produce that development. Language is a social myth as well as a social practice.

I should like to end this paper with a quotation from Stuart Hall (1983, pp6-7), who calls on us to reject the myth of a natural curriculum which 'has never been good enough for the ruling classes but is somehow OK for the ruled. There is no such thing. In fact, every curriculum is constructed through a set of emphases and exclusions and every one is shot through and predicated on certain values. The question is which values? What emphases? Whose exclusions? There is no escape into nature from the tough and difficult business of designing a curriculum for a specific set of social purposes.'

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5. Interpretations and explanations in discourse: modes of advising in family planning

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The purpose of this study is to offer an account of the interaction between professional and client in the Family Planning Counselling interview. More specifically, it is to examine critically the roles and frames of reference of the counsellor as she seeks to offer information and counsel to her client. Central to this activity is the concept of 'advising', and the study seeks to elucidate what its modes are and how they are realised in terms of pragmatic principle, discourse structure and linguistic features.

Hale Ho'la Hou (House of New Life) was founded in 1975 in Kaumakapili Church out of concern for the lack of affordable medical care for the urban poor of Kalihi-Palama area. Three criteria guide its action: service must be provided 1) at low cost, 2) in a non-institutional setting, and 3) by a multilingual staff. The clinic is incorporated in the state of Hawaii as a non-profit corporation, and in 1983 it had 17 full-time employees, providing family planning, dental and nutritional services in addition to primary medical care. It seemed to us that the non-authoritarian relationship between professional and client within a context in which knowledge was being drawn on to offer information as well as education, might produce discourse which fluctuated along a continuum, the pole of which were information-giving and seeking on the one hand, and the specifying of contraindicated behaviour on the other. If this were so, then to be a counsellor was pragmatically and discoursally difficult, since neither the authoritarian nor the libertarian role would capture what counselling might turn out to be. This hunch was confirmed in discussions.

THE IDEOLOGY OF FAMILY PLANNING COUNSELLING

Why IDEOLOGY and its relevance to the analysis of discourse? We take the position that any analysis of language in use has to see such language as the skilled accomplishment of participants in the service of some social goal, and not merely in

terms of a text-as-object. Such an approach is interpretive, therefore, not merely descriptive, and implies an assessment by the analyst of the degree to which participants feel that they have achieved these particular goals. Nonetheless, such an interpretative account will remain inadequate if we cannot infer and explore the social conditions which imbue both particular performances and particular interpretations. To pursue this, any study will need to accommodate not only the distinct perceptions the participants have of the encounters in which they engage, but will also have to understand that discourse regularly naturalises participants values and beliefs in an unconscious manner. We take the view that participants use language, employ communication strategies and infer particular meanings without often any conscious awareness of how such usages act to portray personal, professional and sectional beliefs and values. Ideology in discourse reflects a view that talk maintains the reality of its participants through the taken-for-grantedness of its realisations and their value. The routines of conversation reinforce the routines and relationships of everyday life, and confirm participants in their roles, behaviours and beliefs. Language guides action, and commits participants to particular values and intentions. Ideology in discourse analysis begins from the point that it is crucial to display and explain how language can work indirectly, and under what conditions it can take effect. We start with the idea that the presence of an underlying ideology in talk is revealed at moments of communicative crux where participants' subjective realities are questioned, and turn it into a principled procedure. Ideology in this sense implies critique; i.e. it exposes values and beliefs, makes explicit role and function, and attempts to explore the degree of speaker's control over presuppositions and implicatures. In short, this approach seeks to demystify the hidden yardsticks against which meanings are constructed. It does so by subjecting the use of particular features of interactions to analysis and critique.

Contradictions within FPC are referrable to the relationship between FPC and factors in the social formation. These contradictions at the macro-level work down the line to particular textual choices at the micro-level. Although, in one sense, the purpose of FPC is straightforward, it is also highly value-laden - a socially significant educational and informational activity which is also subject to pressures of broader social policy. This conflict is one characteristic of social work in general, not merely in FPC. What makes FPC particularly problematic is that the issue of individual freedom vs. social responsibility is exacerbated by troublesome value dilemmas surrounding the public's and the counsellor's views about sex, in short, their ideologies. These views not only centre around what individuals regard as acceptable sexual behaviour, but also touch on their capacity to discuss such intimacies. Less often acknowledged, perhaps, is the

pressure upon workers in FPC to take account of current views on the social order, which directs FPC to the poor, the immigrant, the indigent and the medically high-risk. Notwithstanding the protection of the right of the client to decide, it would be naive to deny that certain groups experience the FPC event as coercive, and that certain FPC workers are engaged in debate on the need to prescribe for these high risk groups in any case. These issues point up the more general dilemma of social work in being an agent of change, yet allowing people the freedom to resist change.

There is, therefore, a continuum to be negotiated between intervention and the preservation of freedom of choice. It is this ideological dilemma which characterises the discourse of FPC, and highlights the ambivalence of frame of reference which we have noted. Our informants constantly stressed that their relationship was between professional and client, that clients were treated as individuals, that they were responsible for themselves, that counsellors were there to present facts and be non-judgmental. Nevertheless, being non-judgmental does not imply that FPC workers, or FPC in general, are without values. What we hope to show is that in the world of FPC 'facts' and 'information', like language, are not value-free.

ROLES OF COUNSELLOR AND CLIENT

It would be wrong to see the counsellor only as a provider of information. Some people (e.g. Deeds 1973), prefer to separate information from education, seeing the latter as going beyond the facts to developing sound family planning practices. In this view, communication with patient inevitably implies conscious intent to influence behaviour: 'counselling' which is aimed at providing the patient with emotional support and helping him adjust to his condition and reach his potential; and 'interviewing' which is designed to facilitate receiving the most pertinent information needed to make medical and educational diagnoses. The essential characteristic remains, the freedom of the client to accept or reject advice. Other people (e.g. Manisoff 1970), while separating information offering from counselling, elevate the protection of freedom of choice to a role equivalent to both these. Sometimes, however, a dilemma arises where the patient perceives the FPC as a person with authority and power to give or withhold financial assistance, and this perception conflicts with the other roles of the FPC. In practice, the dilemma of conflicting perceptions of FPC role between FPC and client, and the existence of external pressures from society, make it difficult for FPC to carry out its main roles: the giving and getting of information, provision of support and clarification of problems in an atmosphere of privacy, positiveness and lack of coercion. Deeds' distinction between information and education, for example is hard to make in practice, and so is the distinction between education and counselling. The

variation in perspective between client and FPC is one which stems from the counselling interview being not just an educational assessment, but a psycho-social one as well - there is a reason for the way that the education is being provided. In short, the lack of sharp distinction between roles in a FPC is a characteristic not easily separable from some territorial imprecision between the spheres of the 'educator', the 'social worker' and the 'counsellor'. There will always be some conflict in practice between a non-judgmental stance which advocates clients making their own decisions, and one which puts a requirement on the FPC to advocate in particular cases some form of birth control. At such moments, the FPC sustains a conflict between pressure to dispense, and the counsellor's general role of providing the options. It is the contention of this paper that the negotiation by the FPC of an appropriate place on the continuum, at different points within her encounter with her client, makes excessive demands on her powers of discourse, and that, conversely, it is through her discourse that these conflicts and this negotiation become apparent. From this follows the question of how far the particpants in this process, client and FPC, are aware of the significance of the transactions in which they are engaged, and how far they see them as a possible source of anomie and communicative breakdown. On the face of it, this is a much more subtle approach to the problems of FPC-client interaction than those our informants commonly identified: viz. insufficient language, lack of client feedback and the disturbing presence of partners.

OBJECTS OF FOCUS AND INTERPRETIVE PROCEDURES

The previous sections have provided a basis which allows us to identify some INTERPRETIVE PROCEDURES appropriate to the understanding of counselling discourse. The interpretive procedures we propose have the status of experimental hypotheses which need validation. The procedures themselves have a general cause in a conviction that discourse analysis and pragmatics needs to move beyond botanising to the making of more powerful generalisations about the interpretability of naturally-occurring talk. Such procedures may therefore have general relevance beyond FPC; they may offer us a way of comparing the value of utterances across activity types. The immediate cause for the procedures is the work of Labov and Fanshel (1977).

We argued above that the value of the counsellor's discourse can most appropriately be understood as fluctuating along a continuum between two poles. The two poles are (A) 'information-giving and seeking' and (B) 'specifying contra-indications'. At Pole A the counsellor exercises her role as educator, eliciting from the client information of a medical or demographic kind, assessing her knowledge of birth-control procedures, and then providing the appropriate information to fill in the gaps. At this pole, then,

the client is faced with making a decision or a choice, and is ideally given complete freedom of choice on the basis of this information. At Pole B, in contrast, the counsellor is concerned to detect and specify those behaviours and conditions of the client which may be medically contraindicated for the decision the client wishes to make. Given, however, that the medical staff have the authority to make prohibitive decisions - e.g. refusing to dispense the birth control pill to a heavy smoker - it becomes the responsibility of the counsellor to prepare the client for such decisions.

These two poles capture only part of the interaction between the counsellor and client in FPC, however. The question now arises of what transpires between the two poles? As the counsellor moves between the poles how does her role change, and how are these changes reflected pragmatically and discoursally? We suggest that as the counsellor moves along the continuum from Pole A in the direction of Pole B, her discourse takes on the characteristics of ADVICE. In making this assertion, we are of course aware that we may be in conflict with the accepted ideology of FPC outlined earlier.

Consider one example from our data. Client JA has come to the clinic for a refill of birth control pills. From her medical chart, the counsellor sees that not only is JA a heavy smoker, she is also 29 years old, has a family history of diabetes and cancer, and her blood pressure reading has come out slightly above normal - all contraindications of the use of the pill. In such a case, information such as:

> CR: '...smoking, what it does is it changes your circulation and it might be more chance, especially as you get older of strokes...'

would be considered as being offered within the 'counselling' frame, and may have been intended by the counsellor as advice either to cut down on smoking or to consider another form of birth control. The client, however, who wants both the pill and to continue smoking, prefers to hear the information as 'education'. What constitutes advice, then, is both complex to determine and discoursally difficult to perform unequivocally. It would seem to involve the following factors in the context of FPC:

1: the counsellor attempts in principle to avoid overt advice, but in the case of contraindicated behaviour must give advice in some form, since she is not empowered to direct;

2: the client expects to receive advice from the counsellor but may or may not want to accept such advice in a given case.

As the counsellor negotiates her place on the continuum between Poles A and B, fluctuating from frame to frame, the client interprets her utterances depending on the frame she perceives the counsellor to be operating in. On the basis of this argument, we propose below a set of interpretive procedures for both counsellor and client relating in particular to the concept of advice in FPC.

1: If the information given by the counsellor is directly related to a decision to be made by the client, and to her benefit, such information will be perceived by the client as advice.

2: If information which is medically contraindicative is given by the counsellor in response to a behaviour or a request of the client, such information will be perceived by the client to be either advice or prohibition and will constitute a denial of the request.

3: If the counsellor experiences the need to offer advice, she will do so covertly, formulating it as information.

4: If the client rejects such covert advice, the counsellor must employ other modes of advising.

MODES OF ADVISING AND MODES OF CONTROL

In this section we will consider modes of advising in the light of the authority possessed by the counsellor, both as she perceives it, and as it is perceived by her clients. The issue, then, is the negotiation of place on the counselling continuum as the counsellor goes about the process of advising within the boundaries of her authority. Much of the authority of the counsellor arises by virtue of her knowledge and experience in FPC. Within HMH it is the counsellor, a trained social worker, who has expertise in FPC matters. Her authority has certain limits, however, in that she cannot make medically-related decisions. Such decisions must be referred to the Physician's Assistant. In her relationship with her clients, the counsellor in our study stresses that she makes special efforts to de-emphasise her authority, and in fact claims to see the concept of authority as detrimental in the establishing and maintaining of an atmosphere conducive to free and open talk between herself and her clients: '...the only way you can have any kind of a good relationship in counselling...is for the patient to feel she can trust you...and if you come across as if you're really on a totally different level from what they are, it'll be really difficult for them to open up and let you know what their fears are or what questions they have'.

Nonetheless, the role of the counsellor within her institutional context, and the recourse made to her by her clients, inevitably

accord her that ascribed authority. Perceptions of its intensity will of course vary from client to client, depending on the client's background, her experience and her pre-conceived notions of what a family planning counsellor is like, all in relation to the purposes of the client's visit. A young woman faced with a difficult decision, for example, may perceive the counsellor as a caring figure, whereas the client simply intending to obtain birth-control supplies may perceive her as a provider of a service or as a gatekeeper.

Our counsellor, then, has at least two constraints on her authority:

1. she lacks the authority to make medically-related decisions, and

2. her awareness of the client's possible perception of her as an authority constrains her to minimize the authority she does have in order to maintain a relationship of trust and solidarity with her client.

It is our contention that these constraints act to influence the discourse of both counsellor and client, especially the former, towards greater indirectness of utterance.

An obvious area of application of pragmatics to an understanding of the counsellor's role is that of speech act theory. In stressing the centrality of the concepts of 'benefit to hearer' and 'the hearer's best interest' to the act of advising, we have already drawn informally on the work of Searle (1969, 1975). We have, however, been at pains to indicate that this concept of 'advising', at least as it applies to FPC, is not something that can be identified unerringly, either by the analyst, or by the counsellor, for whom such indeterminacy of performative value is of ideological significance. Our data support the contention that this indeterminacy is intentional; necessarily so, we might argue, if the counsellor is to accommodate the second of the constraints we identified above.

Like Leech (1977) we believe that acts are best placed on continua, instead of being seen as discrete and unproblematically identifiable phenomena. Leech proposes that three pragmatic scales place some bounds on these continuous phenomena: the COST-BENEFIT SCALE specifies how much the act referred to in the propositional content of the speech act is judged to cost or benefit the speaker or the hearer; the OPTIONALITY SCALE specifies to what degree the performance of the content of this speech act is at the choice of the speaker or hearer; the third scale, POLITENESS, is a function of the first two scales, such that politeness factors increase as optionality and cost-benefit factors increase. Another model for

TABLE ONE

Extracts from the data

CR ...the reason I'm asking I'm asking you these questions is because sometimes the birth control method you choose can affect your body in different ways and let's say circulation for the pill or hormonal for the pill...which if it's family related...you could be more of a likely candidate for that problem...so we like to know what your family history is...we like to be aware of that too

...

...it looks like the left side is OK and like I said...the bottom...this is not to alarm you it's just to make you aware...if it's ninety or above there might be some contraindication to the use of the pill or if next time you come back...and it's like ten millimetres we'll want to discuss that since you're using the pill...

...

OK, the other thing that I see from your chart is that you do smoke cigarettes... do you know about that and how it affects...how it's affected with the use of the pill

JA Yes I do

CR can you tell me what you know

JA huh

CR can you tell me what you know

JA about smoking and taking the pill

CR uh huh

JA mm...the risk of getting cancer is higher

CR ok...the risk of cancer with the pill might just be from a hormonal level like if you had cancer in your family, breast cancer for instance, but smoking, what it does is, it changes your circulation and it might be more chance, especially as you get older of strokes

JA oh ...

CR uh huh, so that's and you smoke quite a bit and you're 29, so you're in a high risk group so she's definitely gonna talk to you about that today...um...it's up to the physician's assistant if the birth control method is dispensed or not, if it's a prescribed method...Have you ever thought about discontinuing smoking?

JA uh, I thought about it (laughs)

CR Do you think you'd be able to do it?

JA I don't know (laughs) I guess if I really wanted to...I've been smoking for a long time

CR are you under more stress now

JA I guess you could say so...yeah, cause it was last year that I started smoking more

CR do you think that if you worked on those things you might be able to cut down

JA on the stress you mean
CR well...I don't know what the stress is and I don't know if you're open to talking about that but...from your facial expressions...it seems that you're really hesitant to make a decision to discontinue smoke I mean smoking...that's gonna have to be something up to you... Do you think that if the stress was eliminated that maybe...
JA I could cut down
CR or quit...for your age it's probably better for you to just quit altogether
...
CR that's not necessarily a decision you have to make right this minute. I know that (the physician's assistant) will be taking to you about that...and what we can do is maybe talk about some alternate birth control methods in case she really feels strongly that it wouldn't be healthy for you to continue using the pill...um...the IUD might be an appropriate method for you to use since you've had two children...two full term pregnancies...
...
I know this is kind of backtracking...um...as far as the cigarettes go...if you feel like you need help with that...there's the American cancer society...they have programs to help you with that...
JA to quit smoking
CR yeah...if you need a support group or if it gets down to that...and you're going to choose that over the pill or vice versa...or if you felt like whatever stress...you're having is out of control and you don't have insurance at your job...we don't offer that kind of counselling here...all our work is short term but there is a local mental health clinic
JA mm mm
CR according to where you live...from what I'm getting from you...seem to be reasonably a...everthing's ok unless I'm not picking up...well...you know it's not easy cause everybody... well I've got my bad habits too...and it's not easy...I smoked for eight years too so I know it's not easy
JA did you quit
CR yeah I got allergic to the smoke...so that made it easier I think...if there's some reason sometimes that you know it's not good for you... I mean...I knew that I could feel the allergy, the bumps on my tongue...for you it's the same way, it's a little bit different you can't maybe see what's going on with the pill when you're smoking...but if you know from your knowledge has increased now...that might make it easier for you to make a decision about it.

handling politeness and its realisation in text is to be found in Brown and Levinson (1978). They propose a dimension of POWER and a dimension of SOLIDARITY. Power refers to the mutual recognition by both participants that one is in a position of superiority over another, while solidarity refers to the strength of the mutual bond of intimacy between the participants. A third dimension they offer is that of IMPOSITION, i.e. the degree of burden placed or implied by the utterance of one participant on the other. These axes interact in discourse, and from these interactions the degree of indirectness of the utterance emerges, and consequent upon that, the estimation of its degree of politness.

FPC consultations provide relevant examples of all these factors, and their interplay affects the quantity and nature of indirectness and the types of politness strategies used by the counsellor. Consider again the case of JA discussed earlier. The counsellor, CR, does not have the authority to deny JA the pills, but she sees her role as preparing JA for the possible subsequent refusal of the pill by the medical staff. Whether or not the pills are eventually refused, CR believes that smoking and the use of the pill are potentially dangerous to the client. She sees either a change to an alternative form of birth control or abandoning smoking as preferable courses of action to their concurrent use. The client, on the other hand, sees both changing birth control method and quitting smoking as being costly to her. The pill is more convenient than other methods, and smoking is pleasurable and a difficult habit to break. In cost-benefit terms, then, CR perceives a high benefit in JA's changing methods or quitting smoking, whereas JA sees both alternatives as very costly. The degree of optionality, from CR's point of view, depends on how likely she believes it to be that the Physician's Assistant will refuse to dispense the pill. In power terms, CR lacks the power to refuse the pill, and in any case, avoids the exercise of overt authority, preferring a relationship of solidarity in which social distance between her and her client is minimized.

How then does CR exercise the face-threatening act (FTA) of advising her client that she should quit smoking or change her method of birth control? The data in Table One demonstrate a variety of strategies, all of which constitute, in our view, attempts by CR to lead the client towards the realisation that the long term cost of not accepting her advice might well outweigh the more immediate costs. CR employs a range of strategies: overall she uses negative politeness where she performs an FTA with regard to JA's want not to be impinged on, positive politeness when she performs an FTA with regard to JA's wants, or by going off record and doing the FTA indirectly. What follows is a list of those particular strategies employed by CR. Although it appears from the data to be significant that the strategies are employed in a particular order, and that the first strategy will typically take

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precedence in encounters of this type, it is likely that other orders of strategy use are both possible and likely. The variables influencing this order would include topic, client type, nature of client's business, quality of client's responses to the counsellor on the topic at issue. What we propose here then, is at best an invitation to further study. (In the examples below, A1 refers to the issue of giving up smoking, A2 to a change in contraceptive method.)

STRATEGY 1: Provide relevant information
STRATEGY 2: Ascertain client's awareness of this information
STRATEGY 3: Shift responsibility for FTA to higher authority
STRATEGY 4: Focus on A1, but indirectly
STRATEGY 5: Abandon A1, focus on A2 then resume focus on A1
STRATEGY 6: Claim common ground, empathise
STRATEGY 7: Place responsibility on JA
STRATEGY 8: Allocate disproportionate consultation time to A1 & A2

Soon after the beginning of the consultation, CR employs strategy 1. She explains how the client's family history of both cancer and heart disease could make her a candidate for similar problems if she takes the pill. She explains how JA's slightly abnormal blood pressure reading might contraindicate the use of the pill. In so far as this information is already known to the client, we have an instance of a violation of Grice's (1967) maxim of quantity. Even the giving of this information is mitigated, however (ln 1-18). Immediately following this, CR refers to JA's smoking habit. Here, rather than explaining on-the-record the dangers of smoking and the pill CR attempts to determine via strategy 2 how much JA already knows about the attendant risks. She then fills in the appropriate information (ln 16-36). Strategy 3 involves CR telling JA that the physician's assistant will be talking to her about her problem. In this way CR escapes the need to accept responsibility for the FTA by placing it on the higher authority (ln 35-38). Following this, CR begins a line of questioning focusing on the possibility of JA quitting smoking, her reasons for smoking, and possible alternative solutions to this 'problem'. Once again, however, CR's questions are heavily mitigated (ln 38-63). With this, CR provides JA with a pamphlet on smoking and the pill, and then leaves the topic of smoking, steering the focus towards the topic of alternative methods of birth control. In doing so she effectively approaches smoking again, but by an indirect route. When JA mentions that she has heard about the IUD method, CR takes the opportunity not only to explain the method, but to suggest its particular appropriateness for JA (ln 65-66). After explaining the other available methods, CR appears to be moving toward ending the consultation by explaining the examination which is to follow, the hours of the clinic etc. But before closing the consultation she hedges and using strategy 5 returns to the topic of smoking (ln 68-80). The consultation continues, and CR makes use of strategy 6,

claiming common ground as an example of positive politness, sharing her own experience with smoking and how she was able to quit (ln 83-93). CR's final strategy is one which returns to the characteristic open-endedness of counselling. Strategy 7 places responsibility for the decision on the client. CR reminds JA that now she is informed of the dangers it is for the client to decide what is best for herself. CR also mitigates again here. Nevertheless, the references to unseen processes, the possibility of exploring further alternatives and the suggestion that non-clinic doctors might prescribe where the clinic would not seem in our view to shift CR towards advising. We suggest as a final strategy 8 one which strictly speaking is not linked to any particular point within the consultation. We refer to the proportion of consultation time devoted to the twin topics of smoking and the pill. More than two thirds of the total talking time was used in this way, which indicates its significance to CR, especially in view of CR's complaint that insufficient time was available for client counselling.

In this discussion, we have illustrated how throughout this consultation the counsellor employs strategies which quite typically shift within the counselling frame along this advising continuum. Characteristic is CR's indirectness, evidenced by much mitigation and redressive action. However, it is not the purpose of this paper merely to present a set of theoretical results. We also believe that data of this sort can be exploited for applied purposes. In our view, Applied Linguistics has a major contribution to make to a range of educational and training programmes concerned with human service professions. We see two areas in which this study might be applied, and these are illustrated in Table Two.

1. Training Models
Here we envisage the development of a range of prototypical models for INSET courses for FP counsellors. Because these models will need to take a wide range of variables into account, they are probably best built up from a series of modules (cf Candlin et al 1981). These modules fall into two main types: Training Purposes and Case Studies. So, for example, a WORKSHOP ON FPC COMMUNICATION SKILLS might be organised along the lines shown in Table Two.

2. Media Packages
Here we envisage support materials for the training models. Models for such packages already exist (cf Candlin et al 1978). Typically such packages contain a mix of audio-visual media and printed text, and would be available in both teacher-assisted and self-study modes. They would focus on the sorts of areas outlined in Table One, and an important part of their design would be their authenticity, particularly in the types of interaction they would be designed to promote. They might also include evaluative measures designed to assess counsellor skills, especially as these relate to

and make use of the concepts of pragmatics and discourse explored in this study.

TABLE TWO

Two types of training models, and how they might be integrated into a workshop for counsellors

1: Training Purposes:
Three types of module are envisaged:
..Recognition exercises to heighten pragmatic awareness;
..Experiential exercises designed to involve counsellors in a range participatory techniques;
..Counselling Exercises designed to allow Counsellors to formulate a mode of response to a range of actual FPC events.

2: Case Studies.
Here we envisage a variety of case studies focussing on significant variables in the FPC process, viz: client type, visit type, purpose type and situation type.

3: FPC Communication Skills: A Workshop for Counsellors.

1	Problem Recognition (sub groups)	(video input)
2	Ethnographic/Pragmatic/ Linguistic Categories (plenary)	(text+discussion input)
3	Application of 2 to new data (subgroups)	(analysis of FPC data)
4	Generalisations about pragmatics of FPC (sub-groups)	(inferences from FPC data)
5	Comparison of Analyses (plenary)	(sub-group hypotheses vs. report hypotheses)
6	Case-studies (individual/pair/trio)	(personal reactions to case studies)
7	Good FPC Guide (sub-groups)	(design of an FPC manual)
8	Comparison of Guides (plenary)	(Guides from sub-groups plus this report)

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6. Acknowledging the conversational attempts of a young mentally handicapped child

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INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognised that mothers modify their speech when they talk to their young children. There is less agreement as to whether these modifications have a tutorial effect, albeit an incidental one. (See, for example, papers in Snow and Ferguson 1977, Fletcher and Garman 1979.) Newport, Gleitman and Gleitman (1977) document a number of features in the mother's language which they claim have a direct correlation with enhanced language development. They found for example that the growth of auxiliaries in children was positively correlated with the mothers' use of yes/no questions like Can you sing? However, demonstrating a correlation between two events is not the same as demonstrating causality, and a further sophisticated argument against Newport et al's claims for the advanced development of the verb phrase has been made by Fletcher (1983). Bruner (1983) states that mothers intuitively teach the pragmatic aspects of language rather than the syntactic and semantic aspects, and Barnes, Gutfreund, Satterly and Wells (1983) consider that modifications in adult language to children owe more to the adults' efforts to gain and hold attention than to their teaching strategies. The adults' contribution is seen as the scaffolding whereby the child's immature contributions are held within the conversational framework.

One potential way of investigating the links (if any) between input and output is to look at the input which language-disordered or language-delayed children receive. Mental handicap provides one such context of language delay. Studies to determine whether maternal language to mentally handicapped (MH) children differs from that directed to developmentally normal (DN) children have concluded that the differences are few, provided control groups are matched on linguistic rather than age criteria (Marshall, Hegrenes and Goldstein 1973; Buium, Rynders and Turnure 1974; Rondal 1977; Jones 1977;O'Kelly-Collard 1978; Mitchell 1980). Although the linguistic environment supplied by the mother differs in only limited ways for the MH child, there is one way in which his environment differs which to date has not been considered. The MH child is likely to be spending a significant proportion of his week in school when he is still at a very primitive level of language development: hence it may be appropriate to consider other adults

who are spending a significant amount of time with the child. Most DN children, if not at their mothers' knees at this stage, are at least at the knees of a domestic care-giver, whereas many MH children are in school.

However, many MH children have grossly delayed language and a large amount of non-maternal (i.e. teacher) expertise and resources is spent on endeavours to ecourage and enhance language development. Intervention is almost exclusively through adult spoken input, so the structure and content of that non-maternal input is an important area of study. Teachers and other professionals involved with the education of these children are very aware of the importance of language development (witness the rapid spread of the Derbyshire Language Scheme), and they consider their input to be important. Furthermore, advice is given to parents as to how they might best use their language input to enhance their own child's development. Whereas the teacher of the DN child usually considers that the child has completed the bulk of his language learning, the teacher of the MH child cannot fail to be aware that language development is of prime importance in the school curriculum.

One of the distinguishing features of adult-child discourse in remedial situations, is the frequent use of acknowledgement (Crystal 1979), which is thought to reinforce the child's contribution. Clezy (1979) advocates the observation and subsequent training of parents in the use of acknowledgement. Other writers suggest that this might be a useful teaching device which can be incorporated in conversations and play sessions with children with language delay (Moerk 1974, 1976; Lasky and Klopp 1982; Ochs Keenan, Schieffelin and Platt 1983; Mowrer 1985). Martin, McConkey and Martin (1984) in an intervention study, focussed their advice to parents in the experimental group on modelling language, but the parents were also told to respond to the children's utterances and to expand them as appropriate. Ochs Keenan notes the need for acknowledgements in child centred dialogue and describes discourse where it occurs as 'happy talk exchange'.

When considering how the findings contained in the child-language literature relate to language delay, it is, I feel, premature to give parents categorical advice as to how they can help their child develop language: the evidence is not yet available as to which structures, if any, are helpful, when they should be used, and how often they should be used. However, the more we learn about language structure and use, the better we are able to initiate programmes to test hypotheses, programmes in which both professionals and parents can participate. As part of our preliminary knowledge, we need to have a descriptive framework and some base-line measures. For example, do both teachers and parents use acknowledgements? Do teachers use one type more than mothers? The expansion of the child's efforts has been mentioned as a

possible candidate for intervention and enhancement programmes, but is there any evidence that teachers use this device, and if so is teacher-use more frequent than mother-use?

The data presented in this paper is taken from a large study and focusses on a restricted area of interest. I want to consider how adults, teachers and a mother interacted with a young severely MH child, and in particular how they used their language to reinforce and acknowledge the child's primitive yet vigorous efforts to communicate.

THE STUDY

The adults in the study were the teachers and mother of a Down's syndrome child (IQ|50) aged 4;6. Both the teachers and the mother agreed the child had a number of single words. The child, who was the youngest of five children attended a school for learning-disordered children five mornings a week. Dyads were individually video-recorded as they played, the teacher-child dyads in the classroom and the mother-child dyad in the home. None of the adults knew the exact purpose of the study (although they have subsequently been informed and have given permission for the data to be used). The recordings, each of thirty minutes, were made at three month intervals over a twelve month period, giving a total of four hours. After six months, the class teacher changed, so that the first and second sessions are with teacher A and the third and fourth sessions with teacher B. There was a set framework for each session: for the first fifteen minutes the adult chose the game or work activity, and during the second half the adult was given a box containing a set of toys which she could use as appropriate. All the adults had wide experience, two in teaching and the other in mothering.

ANALYSIS

The adult speech was transcribed orthographically; the child's speech was transcribed using a broad phonetic transcription. Main prosodic features were marked and non-verbal contributions and contextual notes recorded. The adults' speech was analysed for structure and function. In this paper I am concerned with one aspect of the functional analysis.

All adult utterances that followed and related to the previous child utterance were coded as ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. These were then coded according to their function. The eight categories used were as follows:

AFFIRMATIONS are utterances which accept or affirm the child's contribution but do not add any new elements, e.g. <u>yes</u>; <u>ok</u>; <u>that's right</u>.

EXPANSIONS include the child's utterances and add new syntactic or semantic elements, e.g. child: guitar. adult: it's a guitar.

INTERPRETATIONS verbalise the child's non-verbal communications or paraphrase the child's utterance, e.g. child: (signs 'plane'. adult: plane.

COMMENTS are noncommittal remarks, e.g. oh, I see, uh huh.

QUERIES demonstrate that the adult has noticed the child's contribution but is unsure of it, e.g. adult: running along are you?

IMITATIONS are the adult's reiterations of the child's utterances, allowance being made for the adult's attempt to reproduce the child's form of the word.

DENIALS deny or negate the child's utterance, e.g. no, that's not right.

CORRECTIONS are utterances which reject the child's utterance but offer an alternative, e.g. adult: show me his ears.
child: (shows eyes)
adult: that's his eyes.

Totals were obtained for each category of utterance for each session, and, in addition, overall totals for the mother's sessions and the teachers' sessions were calculated. Comparisons were made between mother input and teacher input and the consistency of the input was considered.

RESULTS

The total number of acknowledgements used by the mother and teachers is shown in Table One. It can be seen that there are variations from session to session both for the teachers and for the mother, both sets of figures showing a similar degree of inconsistency. The percentage of mother's utterances that were classed as acknowledgements ranges from 18.32 in the fourth session to 38.21 in the third session. For the teachers, the range is narrower, from 20.85 in the third session, to 26.99 in the first session. Neither teacher seems to differ greatly in acknowledgements from the other. Acknowledgements accounted for 24.29% of the mother's utterances, and 24.68% of the teachers'.

The types of acknowledgements used are shown in Tables Two and Three. Again it can be seen that there is variation across the sessions although preferences for the type of acknowledgement show more consistency: for both mother and teachers the most frequently

TABLE ONE

Total acknowledgements used by mother and teachers.

SESSION	1	2	3	4	TOTAL
Mother					
a: acknowledgements:	114	102	60	94	370
b: utterances:	450	403	157	513	1523
ratio a/b:	.253	.253	.382	.183	.243
Teachers					
a: acknowledgements:	98	125	93	132	448
b: utterances:	363	478	446	528	1815
ratio a/b:	.269	.261	.208	.250	.246

TABLE TWO

Acknowledgement types used by mother.

SESSION	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	%
AFFIRMATION	45	36	13	24	118	31.89
INTERPRETATION	22	23	7	19	71	19.81
QUERY	6	12	16	22	56	15.13
COMMENT	18	8	12	15	53	14.32
IMITATION	7	11	4	6	28	7.50
DENIAL	8	6	3	5	22	4.05
EXPANSION	5	5	4	1	15	5.94
CORRECTION	3	1	1	2	7	1.89

TABLE THREE

Acknowledgement types used by the teachers.

SESSION	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	%
AFFIRMATION	36	46	27	48	157	35.00
INTERPRETATION	25	11	21	31	88	19.64
QUERY	6	43	15	15	79	17.63
COMMENT	6	9	12	26	53	11.83
IMITATION	15	6	5	6	32	7.14
DENIAL	4	5	6	3	18	4.01
EXPANSION	3	3	4	3	13	2.90
CORRECTION	3	2	3	0	8	1.78

used category is AFFIRMATION and the least used category is CORRECTION.

Statistical analysis showed that the differences between the sessions were significant for both the mother and the teachers. (For the mother X^2=36.75 with 24df, p=.05; for the teachers X^2 =73.5 with 24df;p=.001). There is no significant difference between the total number of acknowledgement types used by the mother and the teachers. A significant difference was recorded between the two teachers, i.e. between sessions 1-2 and 3-4. The same difference was also found in the mother.

DISCUSSION

Although the results show that there are differences between individual sessions, they also show that over time the input from the mother might be much more like the input from teachers than was previously thought. A few inconsistencies can be seen in Table One. The number of acknowledgements used by the mother is low in session three, as also is the total number of utterances. (It later emerged that the mother had consciously reduced her input during this session so as to assist me in recording the child's speech.) The data show no overall trend in number of acknowledgements used.

The results also show that there are some small differences between the way the mother and the teachers talk to the child. These inconsistencies are small, however, and the most likely explanation is that they merely reflect the normal variations of interaction that arise in any one session. The similarities in the data are much more striking than the differences. It would seem then, that teachers' and mothers' use of acknowledgements is actually very similar. Ranking the choice of acknowledgement type shows this very clearly. Apart from the categories of EXPANSION and DENIAL, both mother and teachers have identical rank orderings. Both mother and teachers use AFFIRMATIONS in about one third of cases, and the next highest category, INTERPRETATION, accounts for about twenty percent of the data. These patterns are broadly in line with the pattern of results reported in other studies, though the percentage of some acknowledgments produced by the teachers is rather low compared to other work. Wells (1979) for example, found that six percent of the total utterance types produced by adults in interactions with children were expansions, and Letts (1985) reports a speech therapist using three percent of expansions while treating a mentally handicapped child, while a session with a language disordered child yielded six percent of expansions. It may be that these differences are ascribable to the needs of the particular children.

This analysis has looked at only one aspect of the conversational

interaction that occurred in these different dyads. The data are clearly analysable in a number of different ways, but on the dimension studied here, at least, there seems to be a large measure of similarity between teacher usage and mother usage. If this type of feedback is beneficial to the child, then this child is getting good tuition from two sources, and advice to parents about 'good' interaction, looks as though it might be unnecessary.

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7. Writing in a foreign language and rhetorical transfer: influences on raters' evaluations

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It was suggested almost twenty years ago (Kaplan 1966) that rhetorical patterns differ from culture to culture: that while English expository writing has a 'linear' development, writing in other cultures develops in different rhetorical ways. Japanese, for example is typically pictured as developing through a spiralling rhetorical structure, circling the subject but not approaching it directly (Kaplan 1972, Onaka 1984). Contrastive rhetoric research into, for example, Arabic (Thompson-Panos & Tomas-Ruzic 1983, Koch 1984), French (Regent 1985), Spanish (Santiago 1968, Santana-Seda 1974), Japanese (Hinds 1983), Kobayashi 1984) and Greek (Tannen 1979 and 1980) has consistently supported the theory of cultural differences in the rhetorical structure of written discourse. There is besides a much larger body of research into differing rhetorical traditions of oral discourse (see for example, Tannen 1982).

It has often been argued that because the rhetorical structure of written discourse varies from language to language and culture to culture, nonnative writers of English can be expected to have difficulty with the unfamiliar rhetoric of English to a greater or lesser extent depending on their own culture's rhetorical differences from English. This is one of the reasons why 'modelling' (providing an input text and requiring the learner to produce a text of her own, in some ways parallel to the input) has long been a popular strategy in the teaching of writing. Modelling is still frequently recommended (see for example Dubin & Olshtain 1980, Johnson 1983, Weissberg 1984, Henna Stanchina 1985), and is found in current teaching materials, particularly for teaching academic writing (Johnson 1981, Reid 1982, Hamp-Lyons & Courter 1984, Hamp-Lyons & Heasley forthcoming).

The use of models in the teaching of writing has, however been called into question, notably by Zamel (1982), who suggests that Kaplan's work has led directly to the use of models in the writing classroom. She is concerned that

> '...this methodology can be misleading because it may give students the impression that the linear, straightforward writing that they are supposed to imitate is the result of a process that was itself linear. It fails to show students that the thinking and writing that preceded these models

> may have been chaotic and disorganised and that their own attempts to write may involve this same disorder. The study of such models puts undue emphasis on the final and correct product and by doing so threatens students with the idea that they are expected to achieve the same level of competency.' (p206)

The concern Zamel expresses springs from her response to the research in first language composing, which in recent years has come to focus firmly on writing as process rather than as product (notably Murray 1968, Emig 1971, Shaughnessy 1977, Perl 1980, Flower & Hayes 1981). The view of writing which emerges from this research is of writing as heuristic, as a discovery process which is experimental, recursive and personal. In this and later work (Zamel 1983) Zamel reports her own research into composing in a second language, which supports the findings of the L1 research.

It may be that the 'to model or not to model' argument is one of degree rather than one of absolutes. The traditional read/analyse/write approach to which Zamel is so opposed is no longer, if it ever was, common in classrooms. The approach is far more likely to be the one Watson (1982) describes:

> 'If students can treat the model as a resource rather than an ideal, if they can explore it with each other as well as with the teacher, if they can comfortably compare their own products at various stages of composition with that of the professional, then the alien product is truly involving them in the writing process.' (p12)

Similarly, Johnson (1983) describes what he terms 'communicative writing' as (1) having a large analytic component and (2) being discourse-based. In this approach, the starting point is pieces of discourse exemplifying a specific set of writer intentions and of contextual features, which are explored in the analytic component; then the learners are required to perform specific operations, such as rhetorical transfer, on them before moving on to production. Raimes (1983) takes a similar view:

> 'I am not urging readings as models for imitation. ...I am using examination of what a writer says, of why and how she or he says it. ...In this way students see exactly what is involved in writing well, and learn more about what is expected of them when they write for a reader. (pp268-9)

Until and unless research evidence becomes available, the question of whether modelling is a successful teaching technique must remain academic. What I propose to do in this paper is to address what I see as the prior question: whether there is any indication that rhetorical transfer is actually a problem requiring treatment. That

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TABLE ONE

The Markers

Marker	A	B	C	D
Nationality	British	British	British	British
Age	35	28	30	43
Qualifications	MA TEFL	MA TEFL	MSc ApLg	MA TEFL, PhD
Yrs of TEFL	8	3	4	10+
Overseas exp.	S America Middle East	Japan	None	S America Middle East India

TABLE TWO

The Writers

Writer	Language background	Proficiency level
1	Chinese	Advanced
2	Chinese	U. intermediate/Advanced
3	Chinese	Upper intermediate
4	Chinese	Intermediate
5	Chinese	Lower intermediate
6	Arabic	Upper intermediate
7	Arabic	Intermediate
8	Arabic	Lower intermediate
9	Arabic	Elementary
10	Spanish	Advanced
11	Spanish	Intermediate
12	Spanish	Elementary
13	Japanese	pper intermediate
14	Japanese	Lower intermediate
15	German	Advanced
16	German	Intermediate
17	Korean	Advanced
18	Francophone-African	Upper intermediate
19	Greek	Intermediate
20	Indian	Advanced

is, does rhetorical transfer occur and if it does, do the differing rhetorical structures that student writers from other cultures bring to the task of writing in English affect the products of their writing in ways significant enough to have an effect on the grades assigned by experienced raters? I propose to do this, not by

analysing the products themselves, but by looking at the processes of the essay raters as they respond to those products.

For this study, EAP writing, i.e. expository prose of a broadly academic type, such as that commonly required on pre-sessional study skills courses in British universities, was chosen. It is often said that English academic prose discourse is expected to conform to highly conventionalised rhetorical patterns (cf Reid 1982, Nickson 1985); thus this type of discourse may be predicted to be very likely to show significant effects on raters if the conventions are not followed and their expectations are not fulfilled. Twenty essays written by nonnative English postgraduates of varying nationalities and language levels, taking a pre-sessional course at the Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh were each rated by four experienced markers. The four raters were all qualified and experienced teachers of English as a foreign language, who had all previously marked similar EAP essays. Table One briefly describes some characteristics of the markers.

Table Two summarises the language backgrounds and previously determined overall language level of the writers of the twenty essays. The writers' names and any other identifying information were removed from the scripts so that the raters had no information about the writers other than what they extracted from the essays.

In order to avoid 'contaminating' the raters by revealing the focus of the study, they were told that the purpose was marker training, i.e. a search for improved inter-rater reliability. All the marking took place at the same time and in the same room: raters were given a fixed amount of time in which to make their independent decision about a paper. Each rater in turn then reported scores and briefly described the features of the essay which led them to their decision. This was recorded, as was the ensuing, and often intervening, discussion of raters' differing perceptions of the essays. I now propose to discuss five short extracts from the recordings which I believe have particular bearing on the two questions I set myself earlier: does rhetorical transfer occur, and if it does, does it affect a student's writing in ways significant enough to be reflected in grades assigned by experienced raters?

Extract 1.
Discussion of writer 13.

D: He displays a good command of the language in deploying his argument...bearing in mind it's a divergent argument...it's an attempt to integrate his experience with the theme.

C: I'm not convinced...about the structure of the whole essay...which I think is lacking.

A: Yeah...I'd have to be convinced about the relevance of this

...second paragraph...it seems to me the argument is weak.

B: ...I think there's probably a sentence missing, to make that clearly support the decision he's made...because what he's trying to say with that is that... er... people in psychological experiments have thrown up some very interesting effects on people who are treated in this way and therefore it's more interesting to get this point of view... more interesting than the other one... I suppose what I've done is filled in a logical gap there. But I think there is a clear structure which perhaps needed something in between to support it, but I think it is relevant.

C: The language is very competent...I just found the supporting detail mildly irrelevant.

A: Yeah...not well structured...

The first extract is from the discussion of the essay by writer 13, an upper intermediate Japanese. It shows that two raters, A and C, are unable to follow the writer through the thread of discourse, while the other two raters, B and D, recognise that the discourse does not follow a conventional academic English rhetorical pattern but are tolerant of that fact. What comes through to me in A and C's comments is a sense of 'wrongness' about the discourse: what comes through from B and D is a sense of 'difference'. We know from research that in both oral narrative (Clancy 1980) and written discourse (Hinds 1983), Japanese speakers are able to use referential choice and sentence-position of referents to make their texts cohere in ways not available in English: this is what makes haiku so difficult to translate. We can postulate that such differences of coherence properties predispose, or at least permit, a different rhetoric. It is certainly true that Japanese writing in English often appears to 'circle' their main idea, surrounding it with responses, details and examples, but not making explicit the relationship holding between parts of the text. B, who is clearly able to interpret this text without difficulty, has taught in Japan. Later in the discussion he asked: 'Is it a Japanese? Yes, I could've told you. I'm used to...knowing the Japanese... certain cohesive gaps.' He is aware that the essay breaks the rules of academic discourse in English, but is able to read it as if it did not. D is also sympathetic to this piece of writing, although as far as I am aware he has not had a great deal of contact with Japanese writers. We might hypothesise that his longer and more diverse experience has made him more open in general; or perhaps that the rather long time he spent in Spanish-speaking South America, where personalisation of material is greatly valued, has predisposed him towards a personalised treatment of an argument. This would mean that it is the writer's perspective rather than his rhetoric which rater D is responding to. Clearly this is hypothesising pushed rather far, and the fact that rater A has also taught in Spanish-speaking South America (though for a much shorter

period) raises further questions. For the present, only two things can be said with confidence. Firstly, in discussion raters A and C responded negatively to the rhetorical structures of this essay, while raters B and D did not. Secondly, there were significant differences between the scores assigned by raters A and C and those assigned by raters B and D: raters B and D placed the writer at Upper Intermediate level, the same level as the overall proficiency measure, while raters A and C placed the writer at Intermediate level.

Extract 2.
Discussion of writer 20.

B: I found it going on and on and not coming to a nicely rounded proposition. I found it difficult to understand... on the communicative level.

C: ...although the vocabulary is very impressive at first, you think he's saying something and then - I don't think he is.

D: The structure is pompous but clear...it gives you the advantages first and then the disadvantages. The vocabulary is a bit...over-expressive, but I don't think you can penalise that...it's unfair to penalise him on the type of language he uses. The message is clear, if tendentious.

A: The argumentation, the organisation, was a bit obscure at times, it was difficult actually getting it through...He clearly has a nice grasp of the language.

D: Most raters would probably be seduced like I have been... by the bombast.

C: Well- that just put me off entirely. I thought, anybody who can write that sort of thing-...

D: But that's just a cultural thing.

The second extract is from the discussion of writer 20's essay. This writer is an Indian, and again this background is recognised and pointed out later in the discussion. The discussion seems to focus on the way the language is used at the lexical and syntactic levels (long, complex sentences and what is called 'flowery' vocabulary), and the structure of the argument. As the extract shows, rater B finds it difficult to understand; rater C agrees; rater A approves the language, but has difficulty with the argument; rater C finds the argument perfectly clear, and in fact reconstructs it for the other raters, but has ambiguous feelings about the language. Raters A and D, who both have a background in Classics, respond most favourably to the language the writer uses, rater A considering that the writer has a 'nice grasp' of the language, and rater D being 'seduced' by it. However, rater A, who has not had significant exposure to students using Indian English, has problems with the argument, whereas rater D, who has taught in the sub-continent, does not. I am not familiar with contrastive

rhetoric research into Indian Languages and English, or into 'Indian English' and English, and cannot offer more than intuitions on the relationship between the undeniably embellished linguistic code employed and the rhetorical structure of the text as a whole. My intuitions suggest that rater D is right, that the rhetorical structure is not only there, it is there in essentially the same form as it would be in standard (academic) English. For many readers, however, it seems so buried under the linguistic embellishments that they can't find it. In the event, rater D scored the paper as Upper Intermediate; raters A and B scored it as Intermediate, though D's score was lower than A's; rater C scored it as Lower Intermediate. Writer 20's overall proficiency level was Advanced.

Extract 3.
Discussion of writer 19.

C: ... So many linguistic errors there...
A: ... but the message is fairly clear...
C: mmmh
A: ...but the language...sort of...really...gets in the way...but in terms of argument, of organisation, it's much better...I dunno quite...what to...
C: ...no...
B: I found that I had the same problem: linguistically and orthographically it's very poor, and yet its argument, its message, is clearly good.

The third extract comes from writer 19, who is Greek, and it offers an example of a different kind. The raters are in fact quite well agreed that linguistically the essay is rather poor, but that the structure of the essay is good. The rhetorical structure is, in fact, both coherent and cohesive in terms of the conventions of English academic discourse. There are, however, virtually no error-free syntactic strings. The scores eventually assigned by the raters were all in the Upper Intermediate range, while writer 19's overall proficiency level was Intermediate. None of the raters had taught in Greece nor, as far as I know, had more than occasional exposure to Greek students. The research I have read (Tannen 1979 and 1980) suggests that Greeks learn control of the classical Aristotelian rhetorical forms very early and can use them fluently in oral discourse, selecting among a repertoire of rhetorical patterns to suit the context of discourse. It may be that the same is true for written discourse. As our rhetorical tradition descends, however indirectly, from Aristotle, it seems reasonable to expect Greek and English to share many common features.

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Extract 4.
Discussion of writer 11.

B: The first three lines seem to be a restatement of the question...the bit that is his own is extremely poor, says virtually nothing and with many inaccuracies.

A: ...The message I can work out very easily...one or two mistakes but certainly not many.

C: I honestly don't know what he wants to say.

A: I think the only real error there...'that processes' rather than 'those processes'...rest of it is unusual but makes sense (reads from script) I mean if you use a different intonation...you find a 'not only - but also' structure.

My fourth extract relates to writer 11, a South American whose first language is Spanish. There has been quite a lot of research, particularly in the United States, on the difference between Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon learning styles, field-dependence and field independence (Beard 1981), and on rhetorical transfer into English by Spanish speakers (Santana-Seda 1974, Santiago 1968). The essay is very short, but probably contains more error-free strings than did the Greek writer's essay. Interestingly, rater A, who reacted negatively to the Japanese and Indian essays, responds favourably to this one: 'The message I can work out easily' (does he mean perhaps that although it is an effort, it isn't much of one?). Rater A scored this essay as Intermediate, though at the lower end. Rater D (also with teaching experience in South America) also scored it as Intermediate. Raters B and C scored it as Elementary. The writer's overall proficiency level was towards the top of the Intermediate range.

Extract 5.
Discussion of writer 4.

D: ...if you ignore the numbers there's no connection between these points.

A: No, but numbering is a way of doing it...it impresses people so that they don't then look at the internal logic. You can't knock it.

D: No you CAN knock it. It hasn't...I mean...this is note form...you don't use numbers...

A: It's NOT note form.

D: It IS...you don't use numbers in a...in connected writing.

A: But in EAP...

The fifth extract comes from a Chinese writer, writer 4. I chose this one as an example of a phenomenon many of us who teach EAP, particularly intensive, pre-sessional EAP, are aware of: the 'pre-sessional overlay'. Raters A and D clearly disagree quite strongly about whether this veneer of English academic rhetoric -

if numbering and laying out points on separate lines deserves so grand a term - has any value. Notice that they don't disagree about whether the underlying appropriate rhetorical structure exists: they both recognise that it doesn't. But rater D suddenly reveals himself as a purist: tolerant of alternative rhetorical structures in other instances, he can't accept this 'playing the system'. Rater A takes a more pragmatic approach: 'It's a way of doing it'. When the dust settled the disagreement expressed itself in a significantly lower score from rater D than from rater A. D placed the student at Elementary level, B and C at Lower Intermediate, and A at Intermediate. The writer's overall proficiency level was Lower Intermediate.

DISCUSSION

Table 3 shows how each rater marked each of the writers in relation to his/her overall proficiency score.

TABLE THREE

Ratings compared with overall proficiency scores

Writer	13	20	19	11	4
Rater A	-	-	+	=	+
B	=	-	+	-	=
C	-	-	+	-	=
D	=	-	ND	=	-

\- rating was lower than overall proficiency score
\+ rating was higher than overall proficiency score
= rating matched overall proficiency score
ND no data available

If we look at the pattern of rater responses shown in Table Three we see that most essays were rated low relative to measured overall proficiency. The pattern is not the same for all language backgrounds, however.

Let me remind you at this juncture of my starting point, which was the use of modelling as a teaching technique. I wanted to explore whether there was any basis for an approach to the teaching of writing which is product-oriented rather than process-oriented: i.e. do students need to be told, or shown, what the rhetorical structure of academic written discourse in English should be? I wanted to do this through a small-scale process study rather than through a large-scale study because of the tremendous number of variables inherent in any study of essay test scores, not least of

which is lack of reliability. I wanted to watch and listen to the raters actually trying to do the job, and see if any insights could emerge.

My five samples were chosen as the most striking ocurrences in the data of apparent response by raters to rhetorical features: it was chance that the five came from different language backgrounds. I believe that in the data as a whole there are enough indications that there is rhetorical transfer, and that this does have an effect on what raters do, to warrant further study in this area. I also feel that, even with so small a corpus, a whole range of areas have been revealed about which we need to know more. Why was the Indian writer's essay so dramatically downgraded while the Greek writer's work was upgraded? Why did the Arab writers' essays cause no particular problems and show an even spread of rater responses? Is rater D's reaction to 'pre-sessional overlay' at all representative? If so, what does this say about modelling as a teaching technique, since clearly the Chinese writer got his notion of the rhetorical structure of academic English from somewhere. Is a little learning a dangerous thing, and what can we do about it?

CONCLUSION

While the concern of Zamel and others with research into second language writing is clearly a fruitful one, I hope I have shown here that there remains a role for research into the product. I am sympathetic with the impatience that led Zamel to declare 'the investigation of students' written products tells us very little about their instructional needs' (1983, p165), but I believe that she overstated her case. I believe that by looking at the interactions between the student's product, and the score assigned, we can learn a good deal about what needs to be taught, and perhaps something about how it should be taught. For many years the linguistic accuracy of writing was stressed in scoring essays; more recently, ideas, or 'invention' in Aristotelian terms have been stressed. Weir (1984) showed that in subject-specific academic writing content is the priority. What I think these data show in a small way is that structure is important too - usually more important than strictly linguistic factors, though less so than content. Nickson (1985) agrees.

The raters I worked with were all well-qualified and experienced EFL teachers; all of them had taught EAP, and all of them had experience of scoring EAP essays. The tendencies observed in them would, we might hypothesise, be even more marked in less exceptional raters. There are two things we can do: we can train raters to know their prejudices and try to overcome them; and we can help students to fit into the rhetorical conventions of English academic written discourse, as long as we do it well. At the same

time, we need more research to help us know the scale and the shape of the problem.

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8. Conversation as listening material: the prosodic bases of difficulty

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INTRODUCTION

Examination of current EFL listening comprehension materials shows three kinds of limitation. First, in the great majority of cases the listening model is intentionally RP, and deviations from this norm are largely absent. An exception to the rule is Whiteson and Mackin (1977) where the discussion participants have a variety of accents: Scots, Australian, South African, Welsh and New Zealand. Another source for work on accent variety is Hughes and Trudgill (1979), which exploits spoken texts in a range of British accents (Cockney, Liverpool, Belfast, Norwich, Glasgow, etc) either for advanced (EFL) comprehension work or for sociolinguistic applications.

A second limitation is communication style or discourse genre. The prevailing choice in current EFL listening comprehension materials selects from read aloud text, enacted dialogue, interview and conversation. The potential borderline between the last two activities is sometimes disregarded. In Scott and O'Neil (1977), one of the most imaginative and appealing sources for listening materials, the introduction refers to the 'interviews' (with real individuals, on topics of current social interest such as strikes, football hooliganism, etc). The introduction also refers to this same material as 'conversation'.

The versatility of the term has been pointed out by McGregor (1984) who cites the term being applied to '...job interviews, telephone calls, jokes and story-telling episodes, teacher-pupil exchanges, and a range of recorded psychiatric, psychotherapeutic and psychological investigative activities' (McGregor, 1984:73). By the same token the potential distinction between conversation and discussion has not been thoroughly investigated in discourse analysis and, understandably, has not been expoited in EFL listening materials. Crystal and Davy (1975) in a unique and very useful collection of spoken texts, refer to 'conversational extracts' which are clearly highly focussed in terms of topic. The term 'discussion' may be applicable to all of these extracts.

The vagueness and potential overlap of terms such as conversation, discussion and interview, which represent 'spontaneous speech' are

often further complicated by the inclusion of certain types of scripted non-spontaneous speech (e.g. enacted dialogue, read aloud text) in some listening materials. In general terms, then, we do not find EFL listening materials reflecting the diverse totality of spoken language activities in the real world. This is hardly surprising, since as I have argued elsewhere (Johns-Lewis 1985b), an adequate framework for a taxonomy of spoken discourse does not exist, despite the availability of some bases for categorisation of spoken language events, e.g. Hymes (1972) and Gregory and Carroll (1975).

A third limitation of current EFL listening materials involves the selection of a specific language activity - lectures - for often quite specific academic fields (e.g. electrical engineering, biology). Not surprisingly, few listening comprehension courses have been published for use in an ESP context (but see McDonough (1978) A number of (unpublished) courses have been devised for particular ESP situations (e.g. Elliman no date) and there are both published (e.g. Williams 1985) and unpublished (Lynch 1981, Johns 1976) materials for listening practice with non-specific 'scientific' topics such as rates of population growth, food crops, earthquakes and the like. Presumably, the rationale for devising such materials, in an attempt to prepare non-native speakers for the lecture situation, is motivational. The use of genuine specialist lectures delivered within an actual tertiary education institution is fraught with difficulties which are well known. The debate on 'authentic' vs 'non-authentic' texts has been extensively treated elsewhere (See Widdowson 1976, Breen, Candlin and Waters 1979, Breen and Candlin 1980, and Breen 1985.)

What is important for the argument here is that 'simplified' lectures are likely to be different from 'authentic' lectures not only in specific linguistic features, but also phonetically. The prosodic differences (pitch range, pausing and tempo) between pedagogic delivery which is actually reading aloud, delivery before an uninitiated audience and delivery before an advanced, initiated audience are likely to be considerable, and could easily affect the comprehension of the material.

The limitations discussed above involve 1) exclusion of accents other than RP; 2) concentration on a subset of spoken language 'genres', some of which overlap in as yet unknown ways; 3) use of spontaneous and non-spontaneous speech with no clear understanding of the phonetic and prosodic differences between them. Obviously, language teaching forces choices on the teacher. Reasons for excluding accents other than RP from listening materials may not reflect lack of interest in accent variation, but may indicate, rather, a consciousness that learners wish to acquire the prestige norm. However, it is also valid to provide experience of the extent of variation within a particular variety of English as well as the

way this variation structures social meaning. Such information is vital for the planning of languge instruction. The second limitation discussed above raises the issue of why particular spoken language activities or discourse types are selected. If language teaching is to make an informed choice as to which discourse types are worth including then a more satisfactory taxonomy of spoken texts would be useful. The third limitation highlights current ignorance of the differences between spontaneous and non-spontaneous speech (i.e. between unscripted and scripted texts) and of parameters along which such texts can vary.

PROSODIC INVESTIGATIONS OF SPEECH STYLE

A great deal is known about the segmental differences between formal speech and casual conversation. Features often mentioned in relation to casual speech include assimilation, elision, vowel centralisation, h-dropping, t/glottal stop variation. (See Brown 1977.) Relatively less is known about the prosodic differences between different speech styles, differences in pitch range, loudness range, segment and word duration, articulation rate, pause length anad pause distribution, for instance.

A number of studies have made comparisons between the prosodic characteristics of different speech styles. To be valid, such studies must compare the same speaker(s) operating in different speaking tasks. Few studies fulfill this condition. Clemmer, O'Connell and Loui (1979) found that experienced actors spoke faster and used longer and more pauses than inexperienced actors. This does not of course allow a conclusion to be drawn about pause in acting as opposed to other speaking tasks, but points rather to the pause characteristics of good acting. Duez (1982) studied pauses in political speeches (i.e. oratory), political interview, and casual interview, and found that non-silent pauses are significantly longer in casual interviews than in political interviews. She suggests this may be because the lack of time constraints in casual interviews allows the speaker to spend more time on false starts, hesitation, etc. She also found that articulation rate differed in the three styles, the fastest being political speeches, the slowest casual interviews. This represents a hierachy of degrees of practice, or preparation, or both. The fluency effect in political speeches is also reflected in the near total absence of filled pauses in political speeches. Her data cannot unfortunately be interpreted in a straightforward way as ONLY reflecting differences of speaking task, since different individuals performed different tasks. Barik (1979), comparing narration of a story, discussion of a film, prepared lecture, live translation and reading aloud, examined a number of delivery characteristics. There were, among other things, differences in pause duration, speech to silence ratio, articulation rate, and proportion of pauses at grammatical juncture. However Barik's study

is flawed in the same way as Duez's: he did not have the same individual perform different tasks. Fonagy's (1978) laryngographic study of pitch variation in ten emotions rendered by an actress finds that joy, sorrow and fear produced characteristic pitch levels and differing pitch ranges. However, since the study is based on one actress performing the genres it is not clear how far the pitch characteristics are generalisable across the population. Finally a study by Graddol (1985) examines fundamental frequency differences in read aloud texts (technical prose and dramatic dialogue), performed by 30 subjects. His fundamental frequency findings are broadly comparable to those of the experiment reported below. Graddol does not examine prosodic characteristics other than fundamental frequency.

THE EXPERIMENT

In view of the shortage of reliable information on non-segmental ways in which discourse styles differ from each other, an experiment was run which fulfilled the criterion mentioned above: the same subjects performed different speaking tasks in the same conditions. The subjects were 16 amateur actors aged 24-49 performing in three styles: reading aloud, acting and conversation. From these, 10 (5 males, 5 females) were selected by a panel of judges as being 'the best acting voices'. The choice of amateur actors as opposed to professionals was dictated by the limited funds available for the study. Actors were chosen because the investigation aimed to use speaking tasks that were a natural act of communication for the speakers. They were told that the author was interested in stylistic differences between different speaking styles. Being amateurs they represented a range of professions, and two were unemployed at the time of recording.

The 10 subjects were asked to read aloud a short self-contained narrative, to act a memorised script (i.e. without written text) as if for radio performance, and to converse informally with the analyst for 20-30 minutes. Each speaking task lasted approximately 30 seconds, and the same length of conversation was extracted from the taped conversation avoiding the first 5 minutes for 'warm up'. The recordings were made in a very quiet, sound-proofed (but not anechoic) room with the microphone approximately 10cm from the speaker's mouth. The tape recorder, a Dolby Super Seven Ferrograph (Half Track) was in an adjacent room on a direct connection lead in order to eliminate recording hum and the recordings were made at 37.5cm per second.

The method of analysis of fundamental frequency in the three discourse modes is fully reported in Johns-Lewis (1985b). It involved digitised pitch extraction on a mini-computer installation, using an autocorrelation algorithm. The difficulties of using this technique for pitch analysis are well known, cf

TABLE ONE

Mean fundamental frequency (Hz) for three discourse styles:

		Reading Aloud	Acting	Conversation
Males	Mean	128	142	101
	SD	32	39	20
Females	Mean	213	240	182
	SD	54	71	28

TABLE TWO

Speech burst duration (in seconds)

		Reading Aloud	Acting	Conversation
Males	Mean	2.1420	1.7535	3.4133
	SD	0.4875	0.4526	0.5710
Females	Mean	1.8115	1.5762	2.2889
	SD	0.3870	0.1564	0.8006

TABLE THREE

Mean silence duration (in seconds)

		Reading Aloud	Acting	Conversation
Males	Mean	0.6526	1.1524	0.5933
	SD	0.1607	0.4006	0.1891
Females	Mean	0.7342	0.9866	0.6842
	SD	0.1633	0.5400	0.1405

TABLE FOUR

Proportion of speech in text (percent)

		Reading Aloud	Acting	Conversation
Males	Mean	76.23	62.69	85.55
	SD	8.99	9.42	6.42
Females	Mean	72.44	62.94	79.47
	SD	8.11	4.66	6.44

Johns-Lewis (1985b and forthcoming). Although there are difficulties in the interpretation of the output of pitch algorithms, these difficulties are more significant for fine analysis of the pitch contour of an individual utterance than for relatively long stretches of discourse where the error rate is counteracted by the size of the sample - in this case 30 seconds at a sampling rate of 10 KHz.

RESULTS

Two aspects of the results have been analysed so far: long term tendencies in fundamental frequency and tendencies in the proportion of silence. The fundamental frequency results are fully written up elsewhere (John-Lewis 1985b). What follows is a summary.

..1 FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCY
The fundamental frequency data are presented in Table One.

INTERPRETATION: The figures suggest that acting produces greater fundamental frequency variation than the other two modes. In other words the heightened fundamental frequency characteristics may serve a perceptual purpose, acted speech requiring greater articulatory force and projection. Conversely the conversation data display a relatively small amount of variation in fundamental frequency. This could account for the somewhat 'flatter' pitch profile of intimate conversation and its lower level.

..2 SILENCE
The proportion of silence in the talk time and the duration of speech burst are of course interdependent. The figures for speech burst duration are given in Table Two below.

INTERPRETATION: The figures in Table Two could be interpreted as showing that conversation induces longer speech bursts than acting does, with reading aloud falling part-way between the other styles. However this interpretation is not really justified. Although some attempt was made to control for sentence length in read aloud text and acting, sentences in the conversation data were longer (mean sentence length for read aloud text was 7.4 words, for acted text 6.7 words, and for conversation 17.5 words). The experiments ought to have used the conversation data as base and ensured that sentence length in the other two discourse modes was approximately the same. In other words although there is a clear hierarchical effect in speech burst duration, speech burst is not an independent variable and the figures are not in themselves therefore significant.

A second and more significant finding to emerge from analysis of the silence parameter is the duration of silences between speech bursts. The figures are given in Table Three.

INTERPRETATION: The longer silences between speech bursts in acting are probably the result of at least two separate influences: one is the greater articulatory effort involved in public, projected speech. A second is the dramatic effect of silence. Silences in acting are deliberate, planned to convey a particular connection, emphasis or shade of feeling. In spontaneous speech, silences are the unconscious efect of planning at a number of different levels simultaneously. Clearly a greater proportion of the total time is spent in talk during conversation than in acting.

INTERPRETATION: The general trend to emerge from Table Four is that silences between speech bursts are longer in acting than in reading aloud, and longer in reading aloud than conversation. In addition silence occupies a larger proportion of the text time in acting than in reading aloud, and a smaller proportion of the time in conversation than in reading aloud.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study of 10 amateur actors performing in three discourse styles points to some significant differences in at least two prosodic dimensions: fundamental frequency and silence. Acting is highest in terms of mean fundamental frequency, conversation lowest with reading aloud intervening. Acting shows the greatest amount of fluctuation around the mean fundamental frequency value, that is the greatest use of potential pitch range, and conversation the least with reading aloud intervening. The duration of silences between speech bursts is greatest in acting and shortest in conversation, with reading aloud intervening. Speech articulation occupies the greatest amount of text time in conversation, and the smallest in acting, again with reading aloud intervening.

In general terms, these facts indicate that acted material has two prosodic characteristics which may facilitate comprehension by non-native speakers. It is more differentiated in terms of exploitation of pitch range and heightened pitch level, and the smaller proportion of talk to total text means that the listener has less information to cope with per unit of time. The longer silences are likely to facilitate (retrospective) decoding, since each speech chunk is followed by additional potential processing time. Conversation on the other hand displays a lower mean fundamental frequency and smaller pitch range exploitation. In other words it is less differentiated in terms of pitch than acting. In addition the shorter silences and the greater proportion of talk time in total text in conversation effectively increase the cognitive load for the non-native learner by increasing the amount of speech per unit of time.

The conclusion to be drawn from this study is that contrasting

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discourse styles or genres do possess distinctive prosodic characteristics, and that conversation material is likely to be more difficult than certain other discourse categories. This is not, of course, a reason for withholding conversation material from listening comprehension tasks. Rather it provides an additional rationale for selecting and ordering materials. Other criteria will also be important, of course.

In view of the fact that lecture materials have found a place in many EAP/ESL courses it would be worthwhile extending the analysis reported here to lectures, with particular attention to the relationship between prosodic variation and the nature of the audience. Future work is planned in this direction.

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9. Where does language aptitude come from?

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INTRODUCTION

At the 1983 BAAL Seminar Gordon Wells spoke on the Bristol Language Project and gave an overview of the findings obtained up to that time (Wells 1984). He reported that the longitudinal study of the first language development of the 125 children involved had revealed great systematicity in the order in which various language systems and sub-systems are acquired, thus validating the earlier but considerably smaller scale findings of Brown (1973). In addition, he drew attention to the sorts of language environment associated with faster progress in language development, indicating that mothers who extend the conversational topics and meanings nominated by their children seem to be doing something that is of great importance for language development. Accepting the interests of the child and using them as a starting point therefore seems to be a significant influence on subsequent language development. Wells also mentioned that the Bristol results suggest that there is fine-tuning of input to children but that in currently poorly understood ways this fine-tuning is influenced by the child, so that rather than mothers adjusting input to their children autonomously, they allow themselves to be guided by the cues that are provided by the child. For example, clear relationships could be seen between input frequency of various aspects of the auxiliary system and the point at which the child acquired the auxiliary concerned, with the auxiliary in question being produced by the mother at an increasing rate as the point of acquisition was approached, and reducing in frequency shortly after the auxiliary had reached a criterion level of acquisition.

Fascinating and vital as these findings are for second and foreign language learning, they are not the main emphasis of the current paper. Yet another aspect of the Bristol study is the starting point for the research to be reported here. Wells (1985) describes the variation observable in the children's language development at the age of 42 months in the following way:

> 'we find that children scoring as high as 2 Standard Deviations above the mean have the mean of the sample as a whole at the time of the last observation of the older children (18 months later), while those scoring as low as 2 Standard deviations below the mean have a score equivalent

to the mean observed for the sample as a whole as much as 15 months earlier.' (p124)

This is an astonishing amount of variation and suggests that there are very wide individual differences in the speed at which language is acquired. Since it is now increasingly recognised that there are individual differences in first language performance that persist into adulthood (e.g. Fillmore, Wang, and Kempler 1979), the existence of such wide differences in rate of first language development raises the possibility that there may be a connection between them and the differences in pattern of subsequent language ability.

1 A FOLLOW-UP TO THE BRISTOL STUDY: GENERAL OUTLINE

The chidren who were originally studied by the Bristol researchers are now between 13 and 16 years of age, and are now mainly distributed amongst secondary schools in the Bristol area. Such a situation suggested the possibility of the continued monitoring of the performance of these children to see if the data available on their first language development might have any relationship to them now as foreign language learners of French or German. In particular, it raises the possibility of a connection between first language development, on the one hand, and both foreign language aptitude and foreign language achievement, on the other.

The first of these relationships, language development and foreign language aptitude, may perhaps be less obvious in relevance. Language aptitude was studied fairly intensively during the 1950's and 1960's by Carroll (Carroll and Sapon 1957, Carroll 1965) and Pimsleur (1966), who each produced test batteries designed to assess such a set of abilities, and who each conceptualised aptitude as multi-dimensional. In recent years, however, the study of aptitude has languished somewhat, with the concept often being considered a sub-section of verbal intelligence, or the product of previous training, or inappropriate given the current emphasis on communicative language teaching and acquisition-oriented approaches.

In fact, there is evidence to rebut each of these points. Carroll (1965), Gardner and Lambert (1972), and Skehan (1982) have shown that aptitude is separable from verbal intelligence. Carroll (1979), and Politzer and Weiss (1970) have shown that aptitude is not particularly trainable. Finally, Skehan (1982) has shown how aptitude can still be a potent predictor even when there is a more communicative orientation to teaching, and Reves (1982) has demonstrated that the concept of aptitude is a first-rank predictor in acquisition as well as instructed situations. There may be

scope, as Gardner has indicated, for analysis of aptitude to take account of changes in language teaching methods. However, the concept of a generalised set of abilities relevant to language learning is still as relevant as ever, so that it is at least important to use the measures we have available, since it is clear that they will play an important role in any enlarged review of the place of aptitude.

The existence of the Bristol project allows the possibility, for the first time, of studying the origin of aptitude. Carroll (1973) speculated that foreign language aptitude is the residue of first language learning ability which atrophies at different rates with different people. The wealth of first language data on the Bristol sample makes it possible to investigate whether children who are rapid learners of their first language are also those who appear gifted for foreign language study. In addition, the range of data gathered by the Bristol team makes it possible to look for relationships between the PATTERNING of first language development and the PATTERNING of foreign language aptitude.

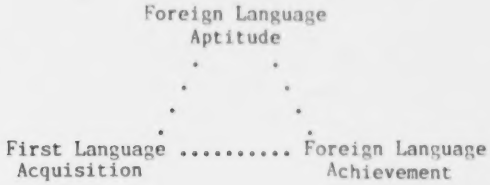
The second relationship mentioned above is more direct. Many of the children concerned are now studying modern languages in Bristol secondary schools, and this allows us to investigate the actual relationship between first and foreign language learning, independent of the possible mediating role of foreign language aptitude. One can simply ask whether rapid first language learners do well in conventional foreign language classrooms, and whether the capacities involved in the former activity are enduring and relevant to the latter.

The two relationships are shown in Figure One. In addition, the triangle of relationships includes that between foreign language aptitude and foreign language achievement. This is a well-investigated area, included here simply for completeness.

Figure One implies primarily the study of the relationship between indices of first language development, foreign language aptitude, and foreign language achievement. However, the main emphasis of this paper will be not so much to study the simple first-order correlations between the classes of variables involved, but to try and invesigate how predictable foreign language aptitude and achievement are through the various indices of first language development. The present investigation will therefore try to establish which categories of first language development contribute most to foreign language aptitude and achievement, and to examine whether the more language based variables are more salient than those which are more related family background indices. Consequently, the present study will largely draw on regression analysis as a technique to investigate the relative contributions of the different variable types. For a more detailed study of the

FIGURE ONE

The Triangle of Relationships.



basic correlations relationships involved the reader is referred to Skehan (in press).

2 THE VARIABLES INVOLVED

The three groups of variables shown in Figure One were assessed by a variety of measures, which are described below.

a) Indices of first language development: These indices were produced by the Bristol team, and were already available on computer files. The main indices used were:

1 Global measures of rate of development (MLU, Bristol Scale Level).
2 Specific measures of rate of development (range of language functions used; development of modification; complexity of noun phrases used.)
3 Test-based measures of comprehension and vocabulary size.
4 Demographic/Biographical indices of family circumstances (class of family background, parental occupations, etc).
5 Measures of the quantity and type of speech and literacy-based activities the children were exposed to.

The first two sets of measures were derived from the spontaneous language recorded in the home by the Bristol Research team. Two cohorts of children were studied by the Bristol team, the older (N=64) born in the year 1969-1970, and the younger (N=61) born in 1971-1972. The cohorts were studied for slightly overlapping time periods, so that a picture of language development was obtained from the ages of 15 months to 60 months, with the older cohort being studied for the age range 39-60 months, and the younger for 15-42 months. The data in this paper will be on the older cohort since the data analysis for this group is at a more advanced stage. The third set of measures was obtained from tests given to the children at around 39 months, and also at 57 and 66 months. The demographic measures were drawn from interview and background data, while the fifth set of measures were based partly on tape-recorded information and partly on interview data.

b) Indices of foreign language aptitude: Carroll (1965) has proposed the following components for aptitude: Inductive Language Learning Ability; Grammatical Sensitivity; Phonemic Coding Ability; and Rote Learning Ability for Foreign Language Materials. Because only limited access to the children was possible, a set of aptitude sub-tests was selected which would be easy to obtain and use, and also relatively brief to administer, i.e. the tests could be completed in a two-hour testing session. Within these constraints, the test battery so assembled was thought to sample the sub-components of aptitude as comprehensively possible. The tests used were:

AH2:	a verbal intelligence test	(Heim 1970)
EMLAT1:	Hidden Words	(Carroll and
EMLAT2:	Matching Words	Sapon 1967)
York Language Aptitude Test		(Green 1975)
PLAB5:	Sound Discrimination	(Pimsleur 1966)
PLAB6:	Sound-Symbol Association	(Pimsleur 1966)

The AH2 was chosen as a 'marker' test for general verbal intelligence. The first test taken from the Elementary Modern Languages Aptitude Test, Hidden Words, requires the candidate to use a misspelled version of a word as a basis for guessing what the original word was. It is postulated that this is done on the basis of native language vocabulary and also phonemic coding ability. The second EMLAT test, Matching Words, requires the candidate to find the word (from five possibilities) in a second sentence which fulfils the same grammatical function as a particular word in a first sentence. The test attempts to measure Carroll's grammatical sensitivity factor. The York test tests the pupil's ability to produce forms in an unknown language (Swedish) on the analogy of the forms presented; it is, in other words, a test of inductive language learning ability. Finally the two Pimsleur tests assess auditory ability, with PLAB5 focussing on sound discrimination in context, and PLAB6 on the candidate's ability to relate sound to symbol.

c) Indices of foreign language achievement: As with the language aptitude measures it was necessary to find easily available assessment instruments. After an examination of a range of possible measures, it was decided to use the NFER/APU tests for both French and German (Dickson, Boyce, Lee, Portal, and Smith 1985). Separate tests are available for Speaking, Listening, Writing and Reading. The tests have a communicative orientation, are aimed at students comparable to those involved in the study, and have attested high reliability.

TABLE ONE

Language Aptitude - Foreign Language Achievement Correlations

	AH2	EMLAT1	EMLAT2	YORK	PLAB5	PLAB6
Listening	.55	.49	.66	.68	.07	.49
Speaking	.59	.55	.66	.68	.10	.33
Reading	.58	.73	.67	.65	.16	.50
Writing	.68	.64	.69	.74	.17	.48

N = 23 : Significance Levels .05 = .41

3 THE BASIC RELATIONSHIPS: First Language, Aptitude, Foreign Language Achievement

This section briefly reports the first-order correlations for the relationships shown in Figure One. (For more extensive discussion, see Skehan (in press)). As mentioned earlier, they are for the older cohort only. In addition, it must be pointed out that while for the First Language/Aptitude correlations N = 53, for the correlations involving Foreign Language Achievement N = 23. This is the result of the children involved having reached the age at which it is possible to drop the study of a foreign language, either from personal choice or because of advice from the school concerned. Whatever the reason, one should also take account of the probability that the children still studying French at the age of fifteen or so are not completely representative of the original sample, since they are more likely to have shown previous success in language study and have been encouraged to continue the study of a foreign language.

The relationships between foreign language aptitude and foreign language achievement are shown in Table One.

There is little to be said about these correlations. They duplicate many others that have been obtained for the aptitude-achievement relationship, and are the least original of the present study. The only point worth making is that by the standards of such correlations these are uniformly high, (except for those with PLAB5), suggesting that the aptitude tests concerned are, strongly related to and very predictive of foreign language achievement.

More interesting are the correlations between first language development and foreign language aptitude. These are shown in Table Two.

Some general points need to be made to highlight the relationships

TABLE TWO

First Language - Foreign Language Aptitude Correlations

	AH2	EMLAT1	EMLAT2	YORK	PLAB5	PLAB6
Family Background	.59**	.37**	.55**	.56**	.19	.33**
Parental interest in literacy	.37**	.34**	.46**	.36**	.20	.16
Qt child read to	.55**	.31*	.46**	.51**	.20	.16
Total Parental Education	.48**	.29*	.48**	.41**	.08	.29*
MLUs 42 mths	.31*	.32*	.52**	.35**	.12	.39**
Comprehension 39mths	.30*	.34**	.45**	.34**	.28*	.48**
EPTV(Vocab. Test) 39 mths	.54**	.45**	.48**	.50**	.32*	.28*
Range of language functions	.00	.05	.09	-.04	.09	.06
Range of sentence meanings	.35**	.30*	.29*	.09	.19	.04
Range of adjectives and determiners	.43**	.30*	.44**	.25*	.00	.31*
Range of modality, aspect+time markers	.17	.21	.40**	.24*	.16	.27*
MLUs 57 mths	.23	.30*	.15	.05	-.14	-.03
Comprehension 57 mths	.36**	.23	.51**	.43**	.27*	.27*
EPVT (Vocabulary test) 66 mths	.33**	.36**	.21	.37**	.11	.18
Range of syntactic complexity	.15	.20	.28*	.04	.23	.20
Range of nominal phrase complexity	.36**	.39**	.43**	.26*	.19	.31*
Bristol Scale 42mths	.32*	.26*	.34**	.29*	.16	.42**
Bristol Scale 57mths	.33**	.31*	.38**	.17	.48**	.11

N = 53 Significance Levels : .05 = .24
.01 = .33

TABLE 3

First Language - Foreign Language Achievement Correlations

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Family Background	.43*	.57*	.47*	.47*
Parental interest in literacy	.23	.35	.38	.24
Qt child read to	.19	.37	.18	.21
Total Parental Education	.24	.43*	.34	.32
MLUs 42 mths	.19	.20	.18	.13
Comprehension 39mths	.57**	.45*	.48*	.42*
EPTV(Vocab. Test) 39 mths	.29	.21	.33	.31
Range of language Functions	-.25	-.17	-.14	-.20
Range of sentence Meanings	-.09	-.22	-.10	-.20
Range of adjectives and determiners	-.07	-.22	-.11	-.08
Range of modality, aspect+time markers	.36	.24	.39	.26
MMLUs 57 mths	-.17	-.13	-.02	-.08
Comprehension 57 mths	.49*	.49*	.55**	.46*
EPVT (Vocabulary test) 66 mths	.67**	.48*	.57**	.52*
Range of syntactic complexity	.00	.04	.04	-.05
Range of nominal phrase complexity	.16	.22	.25	.21
Bristol Scale 42mths	.04	.02	.03	.05
Bristol Scale 57mths	.00	.10	.05	.06

N = 23: Significance Levels .05 = .41
.01 = .53

shown in the table. First, the more stuctural / syntactic first language measures often have significant correlations with aptitude, sometimes at quite a high level. The MLUs measure taken at 42 months, the Range of Adjectives and Determiners, and the Range of Nominal Phrase Complexity, for example, have significant correlations with the non-auditory aptitude measures, reaching a high of .52 with MLUs42 months and EMLAT2 - a remarkable result when one considers that there is a time interval of roughly ten years between the two measures.

Second, the test-based measures of first language development (comprehension and vocabulary taken at both 39 months and at 57/66 months) are the most impressive predictors of all, with some correlations above 0.4 and even 0.5 (EPVT39 and York at 0.50; Comprehension57 and EMLAT2 at 0.51). One wonders here whether comprehension and vocabulary growth are the best indicators of subsequent language development, or whether, alternatively, the strength of relationship may be partly dependent on the fact that one is dealing, in each case, with test performance. Further research will be conducted to clarify this point.

Third, there are strong relationships between family background indices and subsequent aptitude. This raises the possibility that factors like the quantity the child is read to, the education of the parents, and the literacy orientation of the home may be important components in the development of aptitude.

Finally, in terms of the basic correlational relationships involved, involved,there is the data shown in Table Three relating the first language indices to foreign language development. The data are an interesting contrast to those shown in Table Two. First of all, it is clear that the structural indices which related first language development to aptitude do not associate with foreign language achievement. MLUs, for example, yields correlations of 0.19, 0.20, 0.18,and 0.13, none of which approaches significance. In contrast, the comprehension and vocabulary measures seem even more important, producing an even higher prevailing level of correlation, with 12 of the 16 correlation coefficients involved in excess of .40, and reaching statistical significance. Finally, the family background indices also produce some significant correlations, with the index of family background itself producing four significant correlations and the total parental education index correlating significantly with the APU Speaking Test. The implication of these results is certainly that we need a more differentiated view of the first language indices grouped together in Figure 1.

4. PREDICTING APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT

The examination of the simple correlations in the previous

section has been very suggestive of the patterns of relationship between first language development, foreign language aptitude, and foreign language achievement. However, the correlations have been considered essentially singly. As a result , overlaps in influence between the various indices have not been examined properly with the result that it is difficult to assess the relative importance of the different classes of predictor involved, and the extent to which the various measures simply duplicate one another. To address these issues, a series of regression analyses were run to try to take preliminary steps towards the identification of the path of causation linking the different variables. First of all, the achievement measures were predicted using all the potential variables from both first language development as well as language aptitude. Then, regression analyses were run taking the language aptitude measures as the dependent variable and using the various first language measures as the independent influences. Because of limitations of space, only selected regression results will be reported here, but those that are shown are representative of those obtained by examining the patterns of relationship with all the potential dependent variables.

The regression tables using the APU/NFER Listening and Speaking tests as dependent variables and all the aptitude and first language measures as independent variables are shown as Table Four and Table Five. The first impression that one gets from these tables is that high levels of prediction are quickly obtained, accounting for a very high proportion of the variance (i.e. nearly 70%). It is, however, almost certain that cross-validation of these results with larger sample sizes would lead to considerable shrinkage in the value of the coefficients obtained, so that one can be fairly sure that considerable over-estimation of the relationships is taking place and that one ought to scale down these values considerably to take account of the way in which the analysis has capitalised upon the quirks of error variance. Even so, it still seems likely that high levels of relationship are involved, so that the regression analyses do need to be taken seriously.

It is also striking that it is the aptitude tests which exert the more powerful influence on these tables. In particular, the York test and the EMLAT account for most of the success at foreign language learning, and are then supplemented by some first language test-based measures of vocabulary growth and comprehension. It would seem, therefore, that the aptitude tests have 'captured' the useful predictive variance of many of the first language indices (see below for predictions of the aptitude tests themselves) and so preempt them for inclusion in the regression equations. The one type of first language measure for which this

TABLE 4

Regression on listening: all variables

Test	Multiple R	R
York Language Analysis	.68	.46
EPVT(66mths): Vocabulary	.80	.64
EMLAT2: Hidden Words	.83	.69

TABLE 5

Regression on speaking: all variables

Test	Multiple R	R
York Language Analysis	.68	.46
EMLAT 1: Spelling Clues	.75	.57
EPVT39mths (Vocab)	.79	.62
Comprehension Test:39mths	.81	.66

TABLE 6

Regression on York Language Analysis Test

Variable	Multiple R	R
Family Background	.56	.31
Total Parental Education	.61	.37
MLUs 42 months	.67	.44
Comprehension 57mths	.69	.47

TABLE 7

Regression on EMLAT1: Hidden Words

Variable	Multiple R	R
EPVT(Vocabulary) 39mths	.45	.21
Nominal Group Comlpexity	.52	.27
MLUs 42 months	.56	.31

TABLE 8

Regression on EMLAT2: Matching Words

Variable	Multiple R	R
Family Background	.55	.31
MLUs 42 months	.68	.47
Comprehension 57 months	.72	.52

does not happen are the formally obtained tests of comprehension and vocabulary.

It is also interesting to focus on the measures which do not figure in the regression equations. The structural first language indices are notably absent, as are the more auditory based aptitude measures involving presentation of taped material. Interestingly, the measure of verbal intelligence does not enter any of the equations, evidently ranking second to (and overlapping with) the more specific language analytic aptitude tests of EMLAT2 and York. Finally, the various indicators of family background do not enter the equations even though they have sizable first-order correlations with achievement, suggesting that the useful variance that they contribute is already accounted for by other measures.

We turn next to regression analyses which have the aptitude tests as dependent variables. Three of these are shown, in Tables 6 to 8, for the most important of the aptitude tests from the previous regression analyses - York Language Analysis, EMLAT1 (Hidden Words), and EMLAT2 (Matching Words).

Quite clearly, the aptitude test scores are predicted reasonably well by the first language indices, but the levels of prediction achieved are not as high as those for the achievement tests using all the first language aptitude and aptitude indices. Whereas in the previous regressions one was looking at multiple correlations of the order of 0.80, the aptitude tests at best have multiple correlations of around 0.7, accounting for about 50% of the variance. Consequently, it can be said that whatever the detailed patterning of the predictors, there is a considerable amount of aptitude test variance which is not accounted for by the first language indices. Since the aptitude tests themselves are important predictors of achievement, we are led to the conclusion that measured aptitude draws on other capacities, not investigated here, in the achievement of its predictive qualities.

It is also significant that the aptitude tests themselves are predicted with varying degrees of accuracy. The York test has a multiple correlation of 0.69, and the EMLAT2 a correlation of 0.72.

The EMLAT1 has a multiple correlation of only 0.56, with the PLAB tests (whose detailed results are not shown) entering into multiple correlations of 0.46(PLAB 5: Sound Discrimination) and .61 (PLAB6: Sound-Symbol Association). One sees a split, in other words, between the more language structure based aptitude tests, on the one hand, which enter in to higher multiple correlations, and the more auditory based aptitude tests, on the other, which enter into lower multiple correlations.

Clearly, the indicators available for first language development and the test and background data do not account for a great deal of the variance in the auditory tests.

When we examine the first language indices that do not enter the regression equations, the most striking variable to be considered is that of Family Backround. For both the language-structure linked aptitude tests, it is Family Background that enters the regression equation first. Factors associated with class of family background, therefore, are salient in accounting for success on the tests in question. Some speculation will be offered in the final section as to why this should be so, and why, also, an index like Total Parental Education, highly related itself to class of family background, should enter a regression equation second.

A second feature of the prediction of the aptitude tests is the performance of the MLUs 42 months measure. This index, which reflects the developing complexity of the child's first language, does seem to have some importance in the development of aptitude, suggesting that in addition to family background factors, language structure related aptitude owes some of its predictive power to the way it captures aspects of the development of first language skills. This, therefore, is the clearest direct evidence that Carroll's speculation on the residual nature of language aptitude may have some basis. Further research will need to be done to investigate the inter-relationships between the structural first language indices, as there are some which play a more prominent role than others. It is not apparent at the moment, for example, why as crude an index as MLUs at 42 months should emerge as more important than (say) the Bristol Scale derived measures, or the indicators of clause complexity, or verb phrase development. Finally, it is worth pointing out that one of the reasons why MLU enters the regression equations is that it is relatively unconnected (i.e. correlates at a fairly low level) with family background and subsequent literacy based indices. In other words, the sort of linguistic ability that is implicated here does not have much social class linkage (Wells 1985; Tizard and Hughes 1984), and so seems to be an independent component of subsequent language aptitude.

Finally, it should be noted that each of the regression tables

shown draws on one of the test-based measures of comprehension or vocabulary given early in life. We must conclude, therefore, that either a test taking skill that is displayed very early in life, or alternatively, the development of lexical-comprehension skills are important in the development of the sorts of abilities measured by aptitude tests.

5. SOME SPECULATIONS ON THE ROLE OF APTITUDE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

The discussion so far has been mainly in terms of the research results, and attempts at interpretation which go beyond the straightforward patterning of the results obtained have been avoided. In this final section the discussion will be much more wide ranging, using the reported data as the springboard for an interpretation of several strands of contemporary educational research which, it is hoped, will in turn shed light on the data which have been reported here.

It is proposed, broadly speaking, that aptitude predicts because it is an amalgam of important but fairly independent capacities implicated in learning. In particular, the aptitude tests which are based on more linguistic structure seem to draw upon two sets of abilities. First, they tap relevant linguistic skills and knowledge. Thus, it is important that aptitude tests like the York Language Analysis test and the (E)MLAT tests outperform tests of verbal intelligence in predicting language learning success. This is because there seems to be a facility for handling structure in linguistic material which enables some people to do better on these tests. Second, it is proposed, aptitude tests draw on skills in using decontextualised language. The evidence here is only indirect and circumstantial. Still, it enables us to make some sense of the correlational and regression results. It is clear that the aptitude tests are linked with class of family background. Recently, a number of researchers looking at the development of educationally relevant skills which are predictive of school success (Wells 1985; Tizard and Hughes 1984) have noted while there are few class linked differences in oral language ability, there are class linked differences in the development of the autonomous, disembedded use of language. Thus while class provides little basis for predicting differences in oral abilities, it is implicated in differences in ability to cope with literacy-linked activities, and the use of language as a tool to look in on itself, as it were.

It would seem extremely likely that the paper-and-pencil nature of the aptitude tests, together with their requirement that language is used in a decontextualised manner would advantage testees who are able to use language in a disembodied way, who see the point of what may seem to be rather remote out-of-context tasks. In other words, it is not social class, in itself, that leads to class of

family background entering the regression equations so frequently, but rather the social class correlate of familiarity and facility with decontextualised material which is relevant.

Language aptitude, as reflected in the structural aptitude tests, is therefore an effective, predictive hybrid of a fundamental ability with oral language coupled with an ability to handle language as a vehicle. The combination makes for powerful prediction, and allows aptitude tests like the York Language Analysis test to cut out most of the first language indices which might otherwise have entered the regression equations shown in Tables Four and Five.

The next question that needs to be addressed is how such decontextualised abilities become salient in foreign language classes. It seems that this may happen because it is important for the student in such a class to see the point of what is going on in order to bring relevant language skills into action. It would be different if language classes allowed students to use their oral language abilities naturally and meaningfully to talk about things which are important and familiar to them. It is more likely, however, that language classrooms appear remote to many students and that their language learning abilities are used through the filter of layers of decontextualisation.

Some more specific ways in which such influences operate may be seen from recent American research. Wong Fillmore (1985) has demonstrated from a large scale study of instruction for Limited English Proficiency students that a considerable proportion of the success that is experienced in such classroom is linked with factors which enable students to convert the input such classes provide into intake. Thus clear marking of boundaries between the sections of lessons, the familiarity of students with the organisational practices and routines of the classroom, fair and appropriate turn-allocation procedures, repetitiveness, attention to the differing needs of individual students all influence very strongly the degree of success that will be experienced in different classrooms.

In one sense, as Wong Fillmore notes, these are not particularly new features of the good classroom. However, we can say that if they have been demonstrated to correlate with success, the implication is that a significant number of classrooms lack them. This is very important for individual difference variables like aptitude. It is possible to consider good classrooms as those where instructional conditions are clear and do not disadvantage any particular type of student. In such cases, factors such as aptitude may be relatively unimportant. However, the crucial issue is what happens when instructional conditions are less than ideal. Here, it would seem, the onus is on the student to compensate for the lack

of clarity of instructional conditions, and it is highly likely that some students are able to cope with this problem better than others. Hence, if in the language class the problem is to convert input into intake with maximum efficiency, some students may be able to cope more effectively than others with the situation when boundaries between classroom events are not so clearly marked, when the classroom concerned does not have consistent organisational procedures and routines, when turn allocation is haphazard, unfair, and inappropriate, when there is insufficient built-in repetiveness for language use, and when individual student needs are not attended to sufficiently.

In other words, there are likely to be considerable individual differences in the way students cope with less than ideal instructional conditions, and in the way they make sense of, and see the relevance of, the decontextualised ritual that education often is. Here, it would appear, we need to take seriously that aptitude tests are capturing these capacities as well and that that is one of the reasons why they predict so well. Language aptitude tests not only tap relevant differences in linguistic ability; they also provide an index of 'classroom-wiseness'.

In fact, the analysis of the role of aptitude presented here may be generalised to other learning situations. It may also be the beginning of an explanation for the role of language aptitude in predicting success in different learning settings. Some writers, (e.g. Krashen 1981), have claimed that aptitude is limited in its importance to formal situations which connect with learning (as opposed to acquisition). The account provided here makes it clear that this is an over-simplification. The dual nature of aptitude - part residual linguistic ability and part index of the ability to handle decontextualised material - means that it cannot be dismissed so lightly.

The residual linguistic ability aspect of aptitude is likely to be important in all situations, since learning/acquiring language in the most natural of situations still requires language processing and analytical abilities. Indeed it can be argued that the cognitive organisers component of the Monitor Model is precisely this ability (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982), and that individual differences in acquisition are dependent not only on the quality and quantity of input available, but also on the quality of the analysis of such input. This, of course, would imply individual differences in the operation of the Cognitive Organisers. So part of the reason why Reves (1982) finds aptitude to be the best general predictor in an acquisition situation (as well as a formal one) may be the result of differences in language processing abilities among her subjects.

However, the other component of operationalised language aptitude,

an ability to handle decontextualised language use, is likely to be no less important, and not simply in formal situations. It will be implicated to the extent that language learning is not bounded by personal experience. It will often be the case, in both communicative teaching as well as in acquisition situations, that learning will be facilitated to the extent that learners can make sense of the situation they are in. In so doing, they will benefit from their capacities to analyse, to use language as a tool to look in upon itself.

This may be made clearer by examining communicative language teaching, where it is very likely that decontextualisation abilities will be used. Consider, for example, the popular information gap activities that are now commonplace. It cannot be pretended that such activities are part of the ongoing lives of language learners. It is unlikely that such learners would ever normally assemble Lego windmills under instruction from someone sitting in a chair facing in the other direction. There is no context of ongoing life which enables the learners to draw upon shared experience to make sense of what is being said to them by near-strangers with whom they may be united only to the extent that they will both take an examination in the communicative use of English. Instead, the learners have to cope with the disembodied nature of the task and perceive its relevance to their future language learning. In so doing they may well be drawing on very much the sort of skills that are implicated in the decontextualised component of language aptitude tests, with the result that once again, aptitude test information may be the basis for prediction of success, even in non-formal teaching situations.

To sum up, then, two main points are being made about foreign language aptitude. First, such aptitude, as presently conceived, is a hybrid, combining both a language processing ability with the capacity to handle decontextualised material. Aptitude tests are effective predictors because both these component abilities are important for language learning success. Further, the origin of both types of ability can be traced to a relatively early period in life. Second, the analysis of aptitude presented here is general enough to be relevant not simply to formal learning situations, but also to more communicatively oriented classrooms as well as 'acquisition' settings. However, the results and speculations presented here are only a small beginning; further research should enable a more accurate and differentiated picture of aptitude to emerge and should make clearer the linkages between different components of first and foreign language learning ability.

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10. As teacher, as learner

Olivia Farrington

University of Aberdeen

(After several years spent teaching English as a foreign language, the teacher herself enrols for Beginners' Arabic)

As teacher, anxious to give them their money's worth,
Reluctant to stop once started.
The 50 minutes grow, become 55, 60.
How time flies!
As learner, the hour blinks slowly by, sly references to watch.
Only 35 minutes gone, only five minutes to go, now 4, now 3.
Hurrah!

As teacher, careless of appearance:
Hair barely combed; shoes unpolished; finger-nails short of impeccable.
What does it matter? It's the teaching that counts.
As learner, the idle noticing of detail,
Scrutiny of make-up, jewelry, silk blouse.
What was she wearing the other day? A lilac dress, I think.
Skirt a little tight, maybe, but, all the same,
Today she is better dressed. Yes.

As teacher, keen to get through a substantial amount,
So, pushing on, to keep boredom at bay,
With new material, explanations, examples,
Avoiding silence at all costs.
As learner, the luxury of doing nothing, while teacher writes it up.
'Would you like me to give you more words? More grammar?'
'No, no. This is enough.' We could repeat it endlessly throughout the hour
Chorussing to each other, delighting in strange sounds, like 9 month olds:
'Can you come to tea tomorrow?' 'No, I am busy, but the day after, Insha Allah.'
Simple little communicative acts, fanciful, absurd.
The pleasure of saying 'Hello!', 'Here is my passport', 'this is not my camel.'

As teacher, wary of red herrings,
Supressing a temptation to while away the time with talk of pubs and Coronation Street,
And what I had for tea.

As learner, eager for trappings to clothe the language in:
Who talks to who about what, and when? What do Arabs do all day?
The avid snapping up of unconsidered trifles.

As teacher, like a hostess, happy when all are there,
But not too fussed if one or two are missing.
The others will have more of me, more chance to practise
and to ask questions.
As learner, more conscious of the gulf that separates teacher
from taught.
The comfort of belonging to a group.
Oh happy mixture of quirks of diverse sorts!
Panic as numbers dwindle, and feelings of abandonment.
The awful possibility of being the only one.

As teacher, teaching a class of imaginary people who are:
Confident, intelligent, industrious, serious, critical
and impatient.

As learner, lazy, timid, vulnerable, and rather stupid.
Craving niceness, tolerance, encouragement, and entertainment.

Human at last!

British Studies in Applied Linguistics 1

This book contains a selection of papers from the Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, held in Edinburgh in September 1985. These papers all deal with aspects of SPOKEN LANGUAGE, the theme of the meeting. Six other papers are also included which develop aspects related to the central theme: a critique of some widely held assumptions underlying current models of second language learning, an exposition of the application of pragmatic theory to family planning interviews, a discussion on how mothers and other caretakers interact with mentally handicapped children, a detailed analysis of the acoustic characteristics of different speech styles, and a report on relationships between language development in young children and subsequent aptitude for foreign languages.

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